

Fifty REASONS
OR
MOTIVES

Why the Roman Catholick Apostolick Religion ought to be prefer'd to all the Sects this Day in

CHRISTENDOM,

And which induced his Most Serene Highness

Anthony Ulrick,

Duke of *Brunswick and Lunenburg*, &c. to abjure Lutheranism.

To which are added,

Three Valuable PAPERS.

A N T W E R P.

Printed in the Year 1715.



CHRISTIAN DOG
Date of Birth and
Three Years
1888

Three Valuable

P A P E R S

Annexed to these

MOTIVES

FIRST,

The Decision of the Protestant University of *Helmstadt*, in Favour of the Roman Catholick Religion.

SECOND,

Copies of Two Papers written by the late King CHARLES II. of Blessed Memory.

THIRD

A Copy of a Paper written by the Late Dutchess of YORK.

THE
TRANSLATOR'S
PREFACE.

THE Author of this small Book, *Anthony Ulrick*, Duke of *Brunswick Lunenburg* and *Wolfembüttel*, by returning in his old Age to the Communion of that Church, which his Ancestors in the foregoing Century had exchang'd for one new rail'd by *Luther*, gives a Lesson to Persons of every Age and Condition that neither the Concerns of this World, nor the Principles of Education, nor a Fear of displeasing Friends, or of owning ourselves to have been in the Wrong, ought to hinder us from embracing Truth, whensoever God is pleas'd in his Mercy to let us know it.

'Tis the Unhappiness of too many Christians in our Days to be bias'd by one or more of these unwarrantable Motives in Contradiction to the Dictates both of Reason and Religion. For since Christ has built a Church for the saving of our Souls, it must certainly be a very great Presumption, for any Man to expect a Share in the Promises made to her of
the

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the Remission of Sin, and of a glorious Resurrection to eternal Life, if he takes no Care to inform himself whether the Communion, in which he happen'd to receive his Education, be that true Church or not.

But this wise Prince being fully resolv'd to save his Soul, had no Regard to humane Motives. He consider'd, that a wilful Separation from the true Catholick Church would exclude him from Heaven ; that as there were many *damnable* Heresies in former Ages, the infinite Variety of Sects in these our Days were a sufficient Argument to believe these latter Ages were not exempt from the like destructive Errors; and that, since every Branch of Protestantcy pretended to be the purest Part of the Reformation, and quarrel'd with all the Rest, as well as with the Church of Rome, which equally condemn'd them all, he could not answer it to his Conscience nor to Jesus Christ, if he acquiesced in the Distates of the *Lutheran Church* which had nursed him up, without taking an impartial View of all Perswasions, and examining them by such Texts of Scripture as are intended to inform and guide our Judgment in the Things we are to believe of God and of this Church.

How any Man, that calls himself a Protestant, can dispense himself from the like Enquiry, I cannot understand. It being a first Principle of the *Reformation*, that every Christian is to gather the Articles of his Faith not from the Lips of his Pastor, but from

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Scripture by his *Private Judgment*, that is to say, by the Industry of his own Enquiries. Now, if any one is desirous to comply with his Obligation in this Particular, this Book will present him with a short and easy Method of Proceeding in this necessary Search. And provided he enters upon it with those pious Dispositions the Author mentions in his Preface, 'tis to be hoped, he will reap the like Comforts from his Labour.

An *English* Protestant may perhaps be apt to think, that the Duke does now and then charge the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* with Opinions they never held. For his Vindication, I have added some References, which will direct the Reader where to find what ever is imputed to them. And because *Luther* and *Calvin* were the two Leading Men of the Reformation, I have chiefly cited their Works; and where it could be done, without swelling the Book too much, I have given him their very Words. And if these appear on some Occasion to be rather the Suggestions of a seducing Spirit than the Inspirations of the Holy Ghost, it will not be rash to say, that God never sent them to reform the establish'd Doctrine of his Church.

THE

The Author's PREFACE.

THO' for many Years I had employ'd all the Study and Pains and Diligence I was able, in an Enquiry after the true Religion and sanctifying Faith, which I was sensible could be but one, and this upon no other Motive than a Concern for my Eternal Welfare, and a desire to know the Truth; I was yet in Doubt, out of so many Religions and Confessions, which it was that I ought to Embrace. In the mean while, upon this Design, I visited several Universities, I turn'd over whole Libraries, I read the Works of innumerable Authors, as well Catholicks as others, that treated of our present Controversies; I advis'd with a great many Doctors touching the Diversity of Sects and Confessions; I propos'd my Doubts not only to Catholicks, but likewise to their Adversaries; in a Word, I try'd all Ways and Means, without being able to find out the only thing I desir'd. This made me resolve to set all other Business aside, and to choose a proper Time and Place, wherein I might wholly apply my self to this Affair, as being of all others the most Important, because nothing less than an Eternity of Happiness or of Misery depended on it. But that this Enquiry might be to good Effect, and carry me to the Thing I aim'd at, I thought it were best to enter upon it in the Manner following.

First, I earnestly implor'd the Aid and Grace of the Holy Ghost, and with all my Power begg'd the Light of a true Faith of God, the Father of Lights,

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who (1) Lightneth every Man that cometh into the World. For Faith is that singular Gift of God, whereby Man is so far enlightened, as firmly to believe all that God has reveal'd.

Secondly, I made a strong Resolution by the Grace of God to avoid Sin, well knowing, that (2) Wisdom will not enter a corrupted Soul, nor dwell in a Body subject to Sin, And I am convinced, and was so then, that the Reason why so many are Ignorant of the true Faith, and do not embrace it, is because they are plung'd into several Vices, and particularly into Carnal Sins.

Thirdly, I renounced all Sorts of Prejudices, which incline Men more to one Religion than to another, whatever they were, which I might unhappily have formerly espoused; and I brought my self to a perfect indifferency, so as to be ready to embrace which soever the Grace of the Holy Ghost and the Light of Reason should point out to me, without any Regard to the Advantages and Inconveniencies that might attend it, in this World.

In fine, I enter'd upon this Deliberation and this Choice, in the Manner I should wish to have done it, at the Hour of my Death, and in a full Conviction, that at the Day of Judgment I must give an Account to God, why I follow'd this Religion preferable to all the rest. Being thus disposed, I resolv'd absolutely to reject any wherein I discover'd the least Error in Points of Faith. For (3) the Church

(1) John 1. v. 9.

(2) Wisdom 1. v. 4.

(3) Tim. 3. v. 15.

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of the living God is, and ought to be, the Pillar and Ground of Truth.

Now the Pillar and Ground of Truth, supports no Error; therefore the true Church of God can hold nothing Erroneous in her Articles of Faith. After I had thus dispos'd my self, to observe some Method, I suppos'd in the first Place, there were certain infallible Principles of Christian Faith, in which all Christian Societies, how different soever, must necessarily agree, and which no Christian can deny without incurring the Guilt of Blasphemy, of Impiety and of Atheism. Afterwards I laid down Principles, agreeable to the Reason of Mankind, and consulted by every Man of Sense, when he is to make his Choice in the Concerns of this Life.

The Principles agreed upon by all Christian Societies are such as these,

1. There is one God.
2. This God is a most perfect Being, essentially comprehending in it self all Perfection, without the least mixture of a Defect.
3. From hence it follows, that he is essentially True, so that he can neither deceive nor be deceiv'd, nor speak an Untruth, nor reveal a Thing otherwise than he knows it, nor know it otherwise than it is in it self. Insomuch that by his Nature he is true both in his Knowledge and in his Word.
4. God is Almighty. With God (1) all things are possible. With God (2) nothing shall be impossible. Tho' this surpasses the Understanding of Men and Angels.

(1) St. Matth. 19. v. 26. (2) St. Luke 1. v. 37.

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5. *God is faithful without any Injustice.* (1) All his Ways are Judgment: A God of Truth and without Iniquity, Just and Right is he.

6. *God is immutable.* (2) God is not a Man, that he should lie, neither the Son of Man, that he should repent. With him (3) is no variableness, neither Shadow of turning. By consequence, all that God reveals, is true and possible at the same Time; he has a Power and a Will to effect, and infallibly will effect whatsoever he promises.

7. *God is most Wise.* His (4) Wisdom is infinite.

8. *God is Infinitely Merciful.* (5) The Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in Mercy and Truth. (6) The Earth, O Lord! is full of thy Mercy.

9. *God is just.* He rewards the Good and punishes the Wicked. (7) The Lord is righteous in all his ways. (8) He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

10. *God is essentially Holiness, Goodness and Benignity in Perfection,* (9) Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. He is holy not only in himself, but he is likewise (10) Holy in all his Works.

(1) Deut. 32. v. 4.

(2) Numb. 23. v. 19.

(3) St. James 1. v. 17.

(4) Psal. 147. v. 5.

(5) Exod. 34. v. 6.

(6) Psal. 119. v. 64.

(7) Psal. 145. v. 17.

(8) Heb. 11. v. 6.

(9) Isaiah 6. v. 3.

(10) Psal. 145. v. 17.

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'Tis certain therefore and unquestionable, that whatever Doctrine contains any thing repugnant to these divine Perfections, is altogether false; and that what Sect soever holds any such Doctrine for a Rule of Faith, is erroneous, and by Consequence is absolutely to be rejected, and ought not to be a Subject of Deliberation.

11. Man has but one Soul, which will be eternally either damn'd or saved. (1) For, what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?

12. Eternity knows no End. The Course of it is perpetual. 'Tis a Series of unlimited Time, and a number of innumerable Ages to come.

13. There is no Comparison between Things Infinite and those that are not so. O the Happiness of the Eternity of the Saints! O the Unhappiness of that of the Damn'd! One of these two Eternities waits for us. Without a true Faith, I shall never attain the Eternity of the Saints; and if I do not attain it, the Eternity of the Damn'd must be my Lot.

(1) St. Matth. 16. 26.

RULES

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The Christian's duty and obligation to his fellow-creatures, and to his Maker, is the subject of this treatise. It is a subject of great importance, and one which every Christian should be acquainted with. The author has endeavored to present it in a plain and simple manner, so that it may be understood by all.

1. The first duty of a Christian is to love God with all his heart, mind, and strength. This is the foundation of all other duties. If we do not love God, we cannot love our fellow-creatures. The Lord our God is one, and we should love him with all our heart, mind, and strength.

2. The second duty of a Christian is to love his fellow-creatures as himself. This is the result of loving God. If we love God, we will love those who are created in his image. The Lord our God is merciful and full of compassion, and we should imitate his love.

3. The third duty of a Christian is to keep the commandments of God. These commandments are given for our good, and if we keep them, we will be able to love God and our fellow-creatures. The Lord our God is just and holy, and we should strive to be like him. The commandments of God are not burdensome, but they are necessary for our happiness and the happiness of others.



RULES

OF PRUDENCE,

*Which ought to be follow'd, principally
when we are to make a Choice in
Matters of the greatest Moment.*

1.  **I**   N the Estimate and Choice
of Things, a Man is al-
ways to prefer better to
worse; and, by a stronger
Reason, to what is bad;
and so Things certain, to doubtful and
uncertain; true to false; permanent
to passing; eternal to temporal; and
such as are grounded in Reason, to others
that hold no Correspondence with it.

2. To attain to our last End, the only
Object of our just Desires, the Means,
we use must be proportionable; and
of these, the certain must take Place of
those

those that are less certain, or altogether uncertain.

3. Among the Means to attain to our eternal Welfare, those by which many Persons have undoubtedly acquired it, are more secure than those by which it is not evident that any Man was ever saved.

4. Again, the Means, which Reason and the Authority of Persons eminent for Wisdom, Vertue and Sanctity prescribe in order to eternal Salvation, or which the Holy Ghost himself prescribes, are more secure, than those that have only the Recommendation of Flesh and Blood, of the World, of disorderly and licentious Men: For, (1) it is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing. (2) For they that are after the Flesh do mind the things of the Flesh: And they that are after the Spirit, do the Things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded, is Death: But, to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace: Because the carnal Mind is Enmity against God: For it is not subject to the Law of God, --- So then, they that are in the Flesh, cannot please God.

(1) John 6. v. 63. (2) Rom. 8. v. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Upon these Principles and Rules of Prudence, I proceeded to the following Considerations, which discover'd to me many convincing Motives, why I should rather choose and embrace the Roman Catholick Faith, than any of those Sects into which the Christian World stands now divided, and at last determin'd me to reject them all.

Consideration I.

This subject Matter of my first Consideration was, whether it were better for me to embrace the *Catholick* Communion, or the *Evangelical*, a Title, which the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists* in some Places do equally boast of. Considering therefore what the Catholick Communion was, I immediately discover'd it to be the Communion of those, who all the World over, and in all Times, follow the Roman Perswasion, which every where agrees with it self as to the Articles of Faith. On the other Side, considering the Communion, which stiles it self *Evangelical*, at the very first Sight, I discover'd a very dangerous Rock: For thus I reason'd the Matter with my self. This Evangelical Communion
should

should be one, that in its Doctrine is wholly agreeable to the Gospel: Now, the Doctrine which at the same Time is follow'd both by *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* can never be conformable to the Gospel: For two Doctrines that are opposite, or directly contradictory to each other, are never to be reconciled to one and the same Gospel-Truth; but either the one or the other must be irreconcilable. 'Tis clear that the Doctrine of the *Lutherans* and that of the *Calvinists*, are in many Articles opposite, and in some directly contradictory to each other. Therefore it is not possible for both of them at the same Time to constitute an Evangelical Communion; by Consequence, this Communion is a meer Chimera. For my Part, being to make my Choice, I could not content my self with a Fancy, but I thought it my Obligation to make a diligent Search into the Truth of Things, which divine Faith commands us to believe: For this Reason, I would not declare for this Evangelical State, but on the contrary, I judg'd I ought not by any Means to make it my Choice.

Consideration II.

In the next Place I consider'd, since the *Calvinist* and the *Lutheran* Religions could not both be rightly stil'd *Evangelical*, whether one of the two, if separately taken, might not possibly be so; and deserve, by Consequence, to be valu'd above the other? But here I was perplex'd with a new Difficulty. For, my Reason told me, that to give one Thing the Preference to another, there must be more pressing Motives on the one Side than on the other. Now, I was not able to find a Reason, why the *Lutheran* Doctrine should rather be *Evangelical* than the *Calvinist*, so far from it, that I could never yet obtain the Favour of any *Lutheran* or *Calvinist*, to help me to such a Reason. The two Parties acknowledge, in their Defence, some Texts of Scripture; but then, whatever is cited, the *Lutherans* interpret to one Sense, and the *Calvinists* to another. The *Lutherans* will have their Exposition to be true and literal, and that of the *Calvinists* to be false and strain'd: And then on the other Side, the *Calvinists* are as positive that theirs is the proper and genuine

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Exposition, and that of the *Lutherans* erroneous and unnatural. In this Quarrel both build upon the Light of their private Spirits, which are irreconcilably different, and neither side is able to produce the least Colour of a Proof, that his Adversary's Spirit deviates from the true Sense, or that his own has hit upon it. The Case standing thus, it was not in my Power to prefer one of these Doctrines before the other, and therefore I concluded they were both to be rejected.

Consideration III.

I am as much at a Loss to know upon what Principle the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* exclude the *Arians* and *Anabaptists* out of their *Evangelical* Communion: For, these pretend an equal Right to the Name, and that their Doctrine is agreeable to the Truth of the Gospel, nay, that they are more properly *Evangelical*, than either *Lutherans* or *Calvinists*. We read not, say the *Anabaptists*, in any Part of the Gospel, that Infants ought to be Baptiz'd. Jesus Christ himself says in *St. Mark* (r) *He that believeth and is bap-*

(r) *St. Mark.* 16.

tized shall be saved. Therefore Faith must go before Baptism; now, Faith is only to be found in those that are past their Childhood, therefore, no one till then ought to be Baptized: Our Doctrine, by Consequence, is more agreeable to the Gospel than that of *Lutherans* or *Calvinists*, who admit the Baptism of Infants. And thus plead the *Arians*, our Saviour says expressly in St. John's Gospel (1) *My Father is greater than I*. We follow then the Gospel, when we teach that, as to the Divine Nature, the Son is not equal, but inferior to his Father. We admit not upon this Text the Interpretation of the Fathers, who will have it that the Son is less than the Father, according to his Human Nature, but equal to him according to his Divinity; for we think the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* have no Right to force upon us any such Interpretation, since they reject the Authority of Fathers in the Controversies that are on Foot between them and Catholics. For we see no Reason, why their Authority should be allow'd in this Point and not in others.

(1) St. John 14. 28.

But if the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* insist upon their own Authority, or the Interpretation of their private Spirit, the *Arians* and *Anabaptists* will require them to point out in express Terms this their Interpretation in the Scripture; because 'tis a Principle with all of them, that **NOTHING IS TO BE BELIEVED AS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH, BUT WHAT THE SCRIPTURE TEACHES IN EXPRESS, INTELLIGIBLE AND CLEAR TERMS.**

Consideration IV.

The Consideration call'd to my Remembrance those Words of the Prophet *Jeremy* (1) *Stand ye in the Ways, and see, and ask for the old Paths, where is the good Way, and walk therein, and ye shall find Rest for your Souls.* And I judg'd that the Way to Heaven, by which a great many have certainly arrived at it, was better, had less of Danger and more of Security, than that by which it is not known whether any one to this Day arrived. Then I thus discours'd the Matter in my own Thoughts: It is own'd by all the World, that a great many are saved

who lived and died in the Roman Catholic Communion: But who can tell whether any of the other Religions are so? I inferr'd that, in the great Concern of Salvation, the Roman Catholic Faith was a surer Way than any other Religion, and that by Consequence I was obliged to choose it before all the rest.

Consideration V.

I pursu'd my Argument in this manner, Whosoever is saved, pleased God: But without Faith (1) it is impossible to please him: Therefore that Faith and Religion, by which a Man may be saved, is the true. Now it cannot be questioned, but that great Numbers of Persons who profess the Roman Catholic Faith have been sav'd, (it is a Truth our very Adversaries dare not deny.) By Consequence the Roman Catholic Faith is the true Faith; therefore it is our Duty to embrace it.

(1) Heb. 11. 6,

Consideration VI.

From this Argument I drew another. As there is but one true God, so is there but one true Faith. According to those Words of the Apostle (1) *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*. There can only then be one true and sanctifying Faith, as there is but one Lord and one God. So that, if the Catholick Faith be the true and sanctifying (as is proved above) all the other sorts of Religions, are without the least Appearance of a true Faith; and since no Salvation is attainable without the Catholick Faith, I was bound to choose that of the Roman Catholicks.

Consideration VII.

But what still confirm'd me in my Resolution of embracing the Roman Catholick Faith, was this, that the Hereticks themselves confess Roman Catholicks may be saved, whereas they maintain there is no Salvation for such as * are out of the Roman Catholick Church.

(1) Ephes. 4. 5.

* *Through Obstinacy or wilful Neglect.*

What a Madness then were it, for any Man not to go over to the Roman Catholics, who may be saved in the Judgment of their Adversaries; but to fort himself with these, who according to Roman Catholics are out of the Way? Who would not advise a Man to take the safest Way when he is threatned with any evident Danger? And does not that Way which two opposite Parties approve of, promise greater Security than another which one Party only recommends, and which the other condemns! Who, infine, can doubt, but that a Medicine prescrib'd by two Physicians may be taken with more Security, than another which one of the two judges may be his Death?

Consideration VIII.

Upon calling to Mind those Words in *Deuteronomy* (1) *Ask thy Father, and he will shew thee, thy Elders, and they will tell thee.* And those in the *Proverbs* (2) *Remove not the ancient Land-mark, which thy Fathers have set.* I consulted the Writings of the ancient Fathers, to find

(1) Deut. 32. 7. (2) Prov. 22. 28.

what they would advise me to do; whether to embrace the Roman Catholick Faith, or some of the other Persuasions. The first I met with was St. *Augustin*, who of a Manich became a Roman Catholick, and has left us the Motives of his Conversion. (1) *s* in these Words. *There are many things which most justly hold me in the Communion of the Catholick Church: The Agreement of People and Nations holds me: Authority begun with Miracles, nourish'd with Hope, increas'd with Charity, confirm'd by Antiquity, holds me: A Succession of Bishops descending from the See of St. Peter, to whom Christ after his Resurrection committed his Flock to the present Episcopacy, holds me. And in his Book of the Advantage of believing, (2) Are we afraid, says he, of embracing the Communion of that Church, which, as all Mankind knows, by a continued Succession of Bishops in the Apostolick See (in spite of Hereticks barking on every Side, and condemn'd partly by the Voice of the People, partly by the Gravity of Councils, partly by Miracles) has the highest Authority? The second was St. *Irenæus*, more ancient than St. *Augustin*,*

~~and of certain I mention out to you~~
 (1) St. Aug. against the Epistle of Manichæus, called the Foundation, chap. 4. (2) Chap. 17.

who speaking of the Roman Church, says
 (1) that to this Church, by Reason of its
 greater Power, it is necessary that all Churches
 have Recourse; that is, the Faithful on all
 Sides. The Third was Textullian, (2) Hap-
 py, says he, is the Church in her State, for
 which the Apostles pour'd forth all their
 Doctrines together with their Blood. The
 fourth St. Jerome; (3) Know, says he,
 that the Roman Faith is warranted by
 Paul's Authority. And (4) in another
 Place. To speak my Opinion clearly and in
 few Words, 'tis this, that we ought to con-
 tinue in that Church, which was founded
 by the Apostles, and remains to this Day:
 Where he is speaking of the Roman
 Church. In fine, St. Gregory Nazianzen
 in the Poem he writ on his own Life,
 gives this Answer to my Question, The
 Roman Faith was right in Times past, and
 even now it continues to be right, uniting
 in an amiable Knot, all that the Sun sees in
 his Course. Having heard these Eviden-
 ces, I could not but yield to the Judg-
 ment of those Wise and Holy Fathers,
 and so resolv'd to embrace the Roman
 Catholick Faith.

(1) Lib. 3. c. 3. (2) De Præscrip. c. 36.

(3) Epist. 3. cont. Ruffin. cap. 4. (4) Dial.
 ultimo cont. Lucifer.

Consideration IX.

After this, I appeal'd to the Saints of God, and ask'd them what was the Faith they lived in, and by which they arrived at eternal Bliss. And they all made Answer, it was the Roman Faith. Thus I was answer'd, by St. Martin, St. Nicholas, St. Athanasius and many more among the Bishops; among the Religious, by St. Dominick, St. Francis, &c. among the Widows, by St. Monica, St. Bridget, St. Elizabeth, &c. among the Virgins by St. Agatha, St. Lucy, St. Agnes, St. Catherine, &c. whence I drew this Conclusion. These Saints by following this Faith obtain'd eternal Glory; this Faith then must doubtless be the surest and safest Way to Heaven. It is therefore to no Purpose to seek another.

Consideration X.

Then I turn'd to the Holy Martyrs, and inquir'd what Faith it was, for the Truth of which they spilt their Blood, and so patiently endured Banishments, Prisons and all the most cruel Torments?

They answer'd me as with one Voice that this Faith was no other than the Roman Catholick. This I was assured of by thirty three Bishops of Rome, who were crown'd with Martyrdom: By the Saints *Cyprian, Sebastian, Laurence*, by St. *Agatha, St. Cecily, St. Dorothy, St. Barbara* and an infinite Number of other Saints. Then I wound up my Argument in this manner. It is a natural Impossibility for that Faith to be false, in Defence of which such an Army of Witnesses have so gloriously, so readily and so willingly given their Lives. How could I therefore any longer doubt of the Truth of the Roman Catholick Faith?

Consideration XI.

My next Step was in Thought to Hell, where I found condemn'd to everlasting Torments *Simon Magus, Novatus, Vigilantius, Pelagius, Nestorius, Macedonius, Marcion, &c.* And I ask'd them, how they came to be condemn'd to that Seat of Sorrow, without Hopes of being ever rescued from these Flames? And they told me, it was for their breaking off from the Roman Catholick Church, and for being Authors of the Sects which

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separated from it. My Inference from this dismal Contemplation, was, that I ought not to separate from the Catholick Church, unless I were content to burn eternally with those Apostates.

Consideration XII.

No Man can doubt, but that St. Paul's Faith was truly Apostolical. Now this was no other than the Roman, as himself testifies in his Epistle to the Christians of Rome. (1) *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual Gift, to the end you may be establish'd. That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual Faith both of you and me.* Therefore the Roman Faith, was once the Apostolical Faith. That it was so in the Beginning our Adversaries very easily grant us; but they pretend, tho' without a Proof, that afterwards it ceased to be the True and Apostolical; which the Roman Catholicks absolutely deny. For if any one ask them, in what Points, where and when the Faith of the Church of Rome decay'd, they are

(1) Rom. 1. 11, 12.

at a Loss for an Answer ; and yet it lies upon them to prove it. In effect, did we put the Case, that a certain Family was own'd by all the World to have been in ancient Times of a noble Race, and that some one should now maintain that of late it had lost its Rank, which he grants it formerly possess'd, would not such a Man be obliged to point out the Time when, and to bring a Reason why it lost its Nobility ? And if he could not prove it, would not any equitable Judge condemn him as a Slanderer ?

Consideration XIII.

While I was deliberating, whether I ought to fix upon the Roman Catholick Faith, or upon some other that stands in Competition with it, a new Difficulty presented it self, viz. that, if I set aside the Roman Catholick, it would still remain to be examin'd, which of the opposite Religions I ought to adhere to. Whether the *Lutheran* ? The *Calvinist* ? The *Arian* ? Or the *Anabaptist* ? And it would require much Time and Study, to come to a Resolution ; because these Religions in many Points differ from one another, even to the Degree of

charging their Adversaries (*) with destructive Errors. Nay, let it be supposed that I had made my Choice of some one of these; I could not yet dispense myself from a farther Deliberation. For all these Religions have sprouted into different Branches; so that a new Scrutiny would still be necessary, to know into which of these Divisions or Subdivisions I ought to graft my self. For these Reasons I thought the best thing, I could do, was to reject them all in the Gross, and to return to the Pale of the Roman Catholick Church, to which Jesus Christ himself (1) gave some Apostles; and some Prophets; and some Evangelists; and some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ ---- That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Slight of Men, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in Wait to decieve.

* See the first Postscript to Monsr. Meaux's History of Variations.

(1) Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 14.

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Consideration XIV.

When I first enter'd upon this Enquiry, I resolv'd with my self to reject without more ado any Sect or Religion whatsoever, in which I discover'd Errors contrary to Faith and to right Reason: And proceeding upon the Principles I have laid down at the Beginning of this Treatise, I examin'd several Tenets of the modern Religions, which are held in Opposition to those of the Roman Catholick Church; I consider'd them one by one, and took a distinct View of every Particular. My first Reasoning was to this Effect, God is infinite in Wisdom and in Goodness: He has laid upon us certain Commandments, for the Transgression whereof he punishes Man most severely, and even to Eternity. Then certainly his Commands are such, as with the Help of his Grace may be accomplish'd; otherwise he would neither be a wise Law-giver, nor a merciful Lord, did he punish Man eternally for Transgressing them. For no Body will say he is a wise and merciful Master, who commands his Servant Things absolutely impossible, as to stop the Sun's

Course, or to touch the Heavens with his Finger, and who, in case the Servant fails of doing it, does punish him with the utmost Severity, and condemn him to most exquisite Torments. Now God is a most wise Law-giver, and a Master of an unlimited Bounty and Clemency; therefore he has commanded us nothing but what with his Grace we are able to perform: By consequence the Doctrine of all our Innovators has no Foundation of Truth to build on, when they tell us (1) it is impossible, even with the Grace of God, to keep his Commandments.

My second Argument. God's Goodness is beyond Measure. Nothing therefore ought to be admitted, that is repugnant to it. Now it were a Repugnancy to his sovereign Goodness, before he had foreseen a Man's Demerits, to destine and condemn him (2) to everlasting Fire, and even to create him for

(1) Luther, de Libertate Christiana. tom. 2 fol. 4.

(2) Luther de Serv. Arbitr. tom. 2. fol. 466. si placet tibi Deus indignos coronans. non debet etiam displicere immittens damnans. Calvin In Tit. 1. 3. c. 23. n. 6, 7.

that fatal End : Therefore there is no such Decree of Reprobation in God ; and the Doctrine of the *Calvinists* is false and ought to be rejected together with the Sect that teaches it.

My third Argument. God is essentially True and Omnipotent, so that nothing is impossible to him. When therefore our Saviour, (who is also our God) said at his last Supper to his Apostles (1) *This is my Body* --- *This is my Blood* ; either he said not true, and therefore is not the Truth ; or else he had not Power to change the Bread into his Body, and the Wine into his Blood, and by consequence is not Omnipotent, nor the true God. But he is God, and therefore he is essentially True and Omnipotent. In Effect, if God could create the World out of Nothing, if our Saviour at the Marriage in *Cana of Galilee* could change Water into Wine, he can likewise change the Bread into his Body and the Wine into his Blood. Therefore the Doctrine of the *Calvinists*, who deny the Real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood is manifestly false. We

(1) St. Math. 26. 26, 28.

shall bring hereafter several Examples of the like Nature.

Consideration XV.

As I was searching to the Bottom the Credenda of the Protestants, I met with several Paradoxes, altogether incredible, and inconsistent with common Sense and Reason. For Example, the Abettors of the pretended Reformation among other Errors, teach (1) that all Sins are equal, and that no Sin is venial. Upon this I argued in the following manner. An idle Word is a Sin, for our Saviour tells us we must give an Account of it in the Day of Judgment. This Sin then, according to the Doctrine of our Innovators, must be of equal Enormity with any other Sin; as for Instance, with that of Blasphemy, or Infidelity, or Apostacy. Now if the Sin of an idle Word be as enormous as any of those, it deserves an equal Punishment, and must be equally remissible or irremissible, and will as hardly find Pardon as any other Sin. But our

(1) Musculus in Loc. Comm. p. 28.

aviour has given a very different Information touching the Punishment and Pardon of Sins. *Whosoever*, says he, (1) *is angry with his Brother without a Cause, shall be in danger of the Judgment: And whosoever shall say to his Brother, Roca [a Word of Contempt] shall be in danger of the Council: But whosoever shall say, thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-fire.* Here we learn, that a Motion of Anger against a Neighbour, deserves, indeed, some Punishment; but that a biting Word deserves a Greater. Over and above that St. John (2) tells us, *There is a Sin unto Death*, from whence it follows, there is Sin, which is not unto Death, and by Consequence that all Sins are not equal. Besides, there is a Sin, which shall not be forgiven (3) neither in this World, neither in the World to come, for Instance, the Sin against the Holy Ghost. All Sins therefore are not upon the Level, as to the Remission of them, nor as to their Enormity. Infine, we read in the Proverbs (4) *the just Man falleth seven Times and riseth up again; but the*

(1) St. Math. 5. 22. (2) 1 John 5. 16.

(3) St. Math. 12. 32. (4) Prov. 24. 16.

wicked shall fall into Mischief. Some Sins there are by Consequence which do not strip us of habitual Justice, and there are others, which do: I infer, that all Sins are not equal; and by a necessary Consequence, that that Sect or Religion ought to be rejected, which holds the Contrary.

Consideration XVI.

According to the same Sectaries, all good Works are (1) Sins: So that in their Principles, who will likewise have all Sins to be equal, every good Work must have in it self the Enormity of all Sins whatsoever; by Consequence, to Pray to God is a Crime of as black a Dye as Blasphemy; to give an Alms to a poor Body is no better than robbing him of what he has; and to restore ill-gotten Goods to the right Owner, is as blameable as to keep them against his Will.

(1) Luther in cap. 3. Gal. tom. 4. fol. 363. Adversus Execr. Ant. tom. 2. fol. 1100. Opus bonum optime factum, est veniale peccatum.

Consideration XVII.

To press this Argument a little farther, I would gladly know what any of their Parsons would advise a Man to do, that should ask him, whether or no he were obliged in the last Case above-mentioned to Restitution? If he Answers in the Affirmative; the unjust Possessor may ask him again, whether it be a good Work to restore anothers Goods? If he say, it is; the other may Reply unto him; You hold that all good Works are Sins; and again, that all Sins are equal in themselves; so that, whether I restore or retain my Neighbour's Goods, 'tis all one, as to the Guilt of Sin; I will therefore keep for my own Use and Benefit, what I hold to the Prejudice of my Neighbour. Upon a serious Examination of these two Points, I judged them to be equally impertinent and extravagant, as likewise the Sects that teach them.

Consideration XVIII.

God is the sovereign Sanctity; whence we must infer, he is infinitely removed from

from all Sin, and hates it above all Things. If this be so, it is not his Will, nor his Command that we commit it, neither can it in any Manner be imputed to him. It follows then, that God is neither the *Author* nor the *Cause* of Sin, by willing, or suggesting, or effecting, or commanding or working it; or by directing to it the impious Designs of the Wicked, as the *Calvinists*, (1) and as *Luther* (2) himself would have us believe.

Consideration XIX.

I read over and again with all possible Attention, several Historians, as well

(1) *Calvin Instit. l. 3 cap. 23. n. 7.* Nec absurdum videri debet quod dico, Deum non modo primi hominis Casum, & in eo posterorum ruinam prævidisse; sed arbitrio quoque suo dispensasse. Idem docet, *n. 8, & 9.* & de æterna Dei Prædest. Opusc. p. 906, & Beza Expof. de la Foi chez. Riv. 1560. chap. 2, & 3.

(2) *Luther de Serv. Arbitr. tom. 2 fol. 429,* dicimus Deum in nobis operari bona & mala, nosque mera necessitate passiva subji- i Dei operanti, *fol. 434.* Hic est fidei summus Gradus credere [Deum] justum, qui sua voluntate nos necessario damnabiles facit. *Similia habet. fol. 445. 460, 461.*

Political

Political, Ecclesiastical, as likewise the Annals of a great many Nations, to find, it, before the fifteenth Century, there was any where mention made of the *Lutheran* or *Calvinist* Doctrine, or of the other Sects of these our Days. For the same End, I likewise perused a great many ancient Writings and Records of the memorable Transactions that happen'd in each Century, but without finding the least Mark or Foot-step of them. This made me conclude that these Religions were all new, and by Consequence far short of being Apostolical; since they were not left to us by our Saviour, nor by his Apostles, but newly forged in the freakish Heads of their Authors; which gave me just Reason to reject them.

Consideration XX.

It came to my Mind, how I read in my Youth the Book of a *Calvinist* which he call'd a *Journal*, wherein he attempted to prove, by a long Muster-roll of his own Invention, that, ever since our Saviour's Time, there were some in every Age, that held the Doctrine of *Luther* and *Calvin*. But his vain Attempt had no Influence upon me, for the following

lowing Reasons. In the first Place, He will have the Persons, he places in his Catalogue, to have held *Calvin's* Opinion, as well as *Luther's*. So that he dubs them *Lutheran-Calvinists*. He might as well have attempted to make the East and West Wind to blow from the same Quarter; for 'tis Matter of Fact that the Faith of *Luther* and that of *Calvin* are no more to be reconciled, than the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists*. As therefore none of our Sectaries will own himself to be compounded of a *Lutheran* and a *Calvinist*, but pretends to be either a downright *Calvinist*, or a downright *Lutheran*, so those that fill the above-mention'd Catalogues cannot pass for *Lutheran Calvinists*. Neither is there the least Colour of Reason, why the *Calvinists* should derive their Pedigree from that List any more than the *Lutherans*; or the *Lutherans*, any more than the *Calvinists*. Nay, the *Anabaptists* and all the late Spawn of Sectaries have as just Reasons to put in their Claim to it. It cannot therefore be interr'd from any Thing there related, that before *Luther's* or *Calvin's* Days, any Man held, believ'd or taught the Doctrine of *Luther* or *Calvin*, or of the *Lutherans* or *Calvinists* of our Days, in its Purity, if I may say so, and

and full Extent. Secondly, this same Catalogue is wholly Chimerical. For the Persons cited by this Author, are, according to his Computation, true *Lutheran-Calvinists*, because he finds in their Writings a Word or two, or, at most, a Proposition, which the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* maintain at present. But, were this sufficient, he ought to have put upon the Roll of *Lutheran Calvinists*, *Mahomet*, *Judas Iscariot*, *Arius* and all Arch-Hereticks that ever rent the Church of Christ; since all and every one of them have in some Point or other held the same, as the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists*. *Mahomet* held, as they do, that there was but one God: *Arius*, that Councils might err; and that the Council of *Nice* effectually had err'd, in condemning him; so that at this Rate of reasoning, *Mahomet* and *Arius* will be *Lutheran-Calvinists*. 3dly, this Catalogue is absolutely false, for as much as the Author has swell'd it with the Names of Persons, who to their Death profess'd the Roman Catholic Faith, and among these of Popes, Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Religious Men, and even of some who by their Writings have asserted the Truth of the Roman Catholic Faith. And what's his Reason, for so doing?

Why

Why, truly none at all. He will prove St. Gregory to have been a *Lutheran Calvinist*, from his reprehending the Faults of Priests; S. Irenaus, from his commending the Ho'y Scripture; St. Polycarp, from his holding the Apostolical Doctrine; and even *Bellarmin* to have been another, because he complains of the Sins of bad Catholics. Let the World judge, if these be Arguments to prove them to have been *Lutheran Calvinists*. Do not Roman Catholics and their Preachers still inveigh against the Disorders of Ecclesiasticks? Do not they reproach ill Catholics for their wicked Lives? Do not they recommend the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the Doctrine of the Apostles? Will this transform them into *Lutheran Calvinists*? Not at all.

Consideration XXI.

It running thro' all the Heresies of past Ages, I made for my self an Historical Abstract incomparably better than this absurd Catalogue. For I found that well nigh all the Articles of Faith, which *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* maintain, were formerly taught by some other Arch-hereticks, and condemn'd by the

the Church; I do not mean, that any of them taught all these Articles in the manner they are taught by *Luther* and *Calvin* (for there never was any such) but that some Arch-Hereticks taught some of them, and that in different Ages. But this can never be an Argument with Men of Sense, that the *Lutheran* or *Calvinist* Doctrine had a Being before *Luther* or *Calvin*. It only proves (and this indeed by a fair Consequence) that the Religion broach'd by *Luther* and *Calvin* is a Complication of divers ancient condemn'd Heresies, somewhat resembling the Beggars Coat, which he finds among the Brokers made up of party-colour'd Rags, and Patches with some new Shreds of Cloth, of a Colour and Quality altogether disproportion'd.

Consideration. XXII.

Next I took into Consideration the true Marks of the Church of Christ, viz. that it is *One, Holy, Catholick, and Apostolical*. But not one of them could I find in the reform'd, or to give it its proper Name, the deform'd Church. As for *Unity* there's nothing of it; for their Adherents are at Variance upon several
of

of the chief Articles of Faith; and even those of the same Denomination are run into Sentiments and Opinions directly opposite. They are no less Strangers to *Holiness*, which, as *David* (1) observes, directs us to *fly from Evil, and do the Thing that is good*, whereas these Religions are so far from teaching us to decline Evil by the Observance of God's Commandments, that on the contrary they declare it a thing impossible to observe them: And instead of exhorting us to well-doing, they teach us that good Works (2) are no Ways helpful toward the gaining of Salvation, and what is yet worse, they say that good Works (3) are downright Sins. Besides, that they cannot name so much as one Person of Sanctity that was of their Religion. They are equally at a Loss how to prove their Church *Catholick* or *Universal*; for their Faith has never been spread throughout

(1) *Psal.* 37. 27.

(2) *Luther de Servo Arbitr. tom. 2. fol. 453. si bonum operarentur propter regnum obtinendum, nunquam obtinerent.*

(3) *Luth. Adv. Execra. Antich. tom. 2. fol. 110. In cap. 3. ad Gal. tom. 5. fol. 363, Confit. Ratio. tom. 2. fol. 26. De Votis, fol. 281.*

the World, as the Roman has, according to that of the Apostle, (1) *Their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the ends of the World.* Add to this, that their Religion cannot be traced back thro' every Age; for before the Year 1517, it was no where spoken of. And at this Day it is not known over all the World; it has only nestled in some few Provinces of *Europe*, which is the smallest Part of the Universe, compared with *Africa*, *Asia*, and *America*, where it is so far from being establish'd, that it is not so much as mention'd, excepting a few Corners, where the Sectaries have gain'd a Settlement upon no other Account but that of Commerce. Infine, it cannot be *Apostolical*, by Reason that it was not founded by the Apostles, nor is able to shew a continual Succession of its Pastors or its Doctrine from those first Planters of the Church of Christ. On the other side, all these Marks are shew'd by all Manner of Proofs to be inherent in the Roman Catholick Church. So that I had all the Reason in the World to prefer it before any of the Rest.

(1) Rom. 10. 18.

Consideration XXIII.

Then I began to confider, how so many different Nations, Provinces and whole Kingdoms turn'd from Heathenism to Christianity: I found it was done after an admirable Manner, and that such a Conversion could never have been effected without the Divine Power and Assistance, by Reason of the many Obstacles on the Part of powerful Emperors, Kings and Tyrants, whose Cruelty was to be undergone, and Obstinacy to be surmounted; and chiefly by Reason that the Christian Faith recommended to them Things contrary to Flesh and Blood and to the Maxims of the World, and proposed to their Belief sublime and hidden Mysteries, which the Light of Nature alone was not able to comprehend; and all this by Preachers destitute of all human Support. Upon a serious Contemplation of these Predigious Conversions, I began to think what that Faith and Religion was, and I soon discover'd it to be the Roman Catholick Apostolick, which wrought these Wonders by Men of an Apostolical Spirit, sent by the chief Bishops to preach the Gospel. Our
 very

very Adversaries will confess, that during the five first Ages, there was no other Religion to which Nations were converted. The 6th Age saw *England* converted by St. *Augustin* a Monk, sent thither by St. *Gregory* Pope. In the seventh *Germany* embraced the Faith by the Preaching of St. *Boniface*, who received his Mission from Pope *Gregory III.* St. *Cyril* and St. *Methodius* converted *Moravia* in the Eighth. In the ninth *Hungary* and *Poland* were converted by St. *Adelbert*, St. *Philigrin* and others. In the tenth *Bohemia*, and *Muscovy*; and long before this *Freezland* by St. *Boniface* and St. *Willebrod*. In the eleventh *Pomerania* by St. *Bruno*. In the twelfth *Livonia* by St. *Meinard*, and *Sweden* by *Nicholas Breakspear*, who was afterwards advanc'd to the See of *Rome*; In the two last Ages a vast number of Provinces as well in the East as West Indies, and a far greater Tract of Land, than all *Europe* together, have been brought to the Christian Faith, which is no other than the Roman Catholick, and the Number of Converts there is daily on the Increase. But after the strictest Search I have been able to make, I have not found so much as one single Pagan Nation that has embraced

Lu-

Lutheranism, or *Calvinism*, or any of our new Sects. All their Profelites, as far as I can learn, are loose and debauched Catholicks, who have not, in all Appearance, any other Motive for leaping the Pale of the Roman Catholick Church, than sensual Pleasures and worldly Satisfaction. From these Premises the most rational Conclusion I was able to draw, was that the Roman Catholick Apostolick Religion ought to be chosen before any of our new-broach'd Sects.

Consideration XXIV.

The foregoing Consideration carried me on to this farther Remark: That God bestow'd on all the Apostles, and on all Apostolical Men, whom in former Ages he chose and sent for the Conversion of Countries and Nations, the Gift of extraordinary Miracles, according to that Promise recorded by St. *Matthew*, (1) Go, said our Saviour to his Disciples, *preach ... heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils.* Of which Promise we read the Accomplishment in St. *Mark's* last Words, *And they went*

forth, and preach'd every where, the Lord
working with them and confirming the Word
with Signs following.

The Master Builders of our modern
Sects, may, as long as they please, boast
their Mission from God for the refor-
ming of his Church; they have never
yet produc'd any of the aforesaid Signs
nor wrought a Miracle in Confirmation
of their Doctrine or their Mission, not
so much as the Cure of a lame Dog, as
a certain Author tells them. How then
could I believe that God had sent them,
especially since our Saviour has fore-
warn'd us (1) to *Beware of false Prophets,*
which come in Sheep's cloathing, [having al-
ways in their Mouths the HOLY
SCRIPTURE and the GOSPEL] *but*
inwardly they are ravening Wolves. Which
is yet more evident, from their clashing
with one another, and preaching incon-
sistent Doctrine, as *Luther* and *Calvin* did.
It being impossible for both of them to
have taught the Truth, and by Conse-
quence to have receiv'd from God a Com-
mission to reform his Church, since the
one gives no better Proof, than the o-
ther of his Commission. For which

(1) Matthe 7. 15.

Reason I judg'd, that neither of them was worthy to be believ'd.

Consideration XXV.

I likewise took a View of the Lives and Manners of these first Reformers. And I compar'd them with those Apostolical Men, who from Paganism brought the Gentiles to the Roman Catholick Faith. And there appear'd as great a Disproportion betwixt them, as there is betwixt Light and Darknes, betwixt Heaven and Earth. Those Apostolical Men were Persons of eminent Devotion, were closely united to God, indued with many singular Virtues, were Pious, Sober, Humble and Chaste, they despis'd the Riches of the World, fled from Pleasures, and had no other View than God's Glory in the Salvation of Souls. as appears from the History of their Lives, and from their Writings. On the contrary, these pretended Reformers were Slaves to their Bellies, and to carnal Pleasures, Apostates, Perjurers, Vow Breakers, Proud and Impious, and broach'd Doctrines that flatter'd Sense to a most shameful Degree. Their Lives and Writings bear Witness to this Charge. What Mortal was ever more

swell'd

well'd with Pride and Arrogance and
 Presumption than *Luther* (1) and *Cal-*
vin (2) who preferr'd themselves to all
 Antiquity, and their Sense of the Ho-
 ly Scriptures to that of all the Saints
 and Fathers of God's Church? What
 Author has ever sent abroad Books so
 beastly (3) and full of Filth as *Luther*?
 Or so impious and Blasphemous (4) as
Calvin? They have both writ in such a
 manner, that their very Followers are
 now ashamed of them.

Consideration XXVI.

Another powerful Inducement to the
 Roman Catholick Religion was this,
 that even in our Days great Numbers,
 fir'd with a Zeal of Souls, undervaluing
 the Conveniencies of Life, leaving Friends
 and Relations, renouncing the Ho-

(1) *Luther* cont. Reg. Angliæ. tom. 2. fol. 344.
 347 Resp. ad Reg. Angl. fol. 498. Advers. Exc-
 rab. fol. 93. 109. Ad Episc. fol. 305.

(2) *Calvin* Traët de Reform. Eccl. Opusc. p.
 81. Episc. ad Melan. p. 108.

(3) *Advers. Pap.* 107. fol. 451. Serm. de Matr. t.
 fol. 119. In 1 Cor. 7. tom. 5. fol. 111, 112.

(4) *Instit. l. 1. c. 14. n. 3. in cap. 17. Jo. v. 12.*
in c. 3. ad Gal. Instit. l. 1. c. 13. n. 9. 23, 24. l. 2.
16. n. 12. l. 4. c. 14. n. 3.

nours, Dignities and Advantages, of which they are in Possession, or in a reasonable Expectation, go chearfully in Quest of People to the farthest Corners of the Earth, that they may preach to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ, instruct them in the Principles of Faith, and convert them to Christianity, without any Apprehension of the Dangers incident to such long Voyages, of the Cruelty of Tyrants, or of Death it self, which they have Reason to expect from the Malice of a barbarous People; and with Assurance they may be able to say, as St. Paul did (1) *I am in Labours more abundant, in Stripes above Measure, in Prisons more frequent, in Deaths oft.* But we never find the like among the Preachers of the other Religions. And this obliged me to conclude, that those were full, these empty of the Spirit of God: For, (2) *Greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends.*

Consideration XXVII.

Again, I admired to see, among the Roman Catholicks, so many Persons, who might live easie in the World, by

(1) 2 Cor. 11. 23.

(2) John 15. 13.

Reason

Reason of their plentiful Estates, and all the Conveniences that are used to wait upon illustrious Families, not only young Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, but many others descended of Barons, Counts, Marquisses and Princes; I say, to see these trample on all the Delights and Pleasures of the World, and with such chearful Hearts to press through a thousand Obstacles, and immure themselves in austere and poor Cloisters, and this upon no other Motive than the Love of God, and the securing of their Salvation. Can any of the new Religions shew me a Parallel to this? Or rather, don't they all run directly Counter, Over and above, that, among their Ministers you will scarce find one, of noble Extraction, or of any considerable Family above the Vulgar. I say not this, as if I pretended that God makes any Distinction of Persons, I know very well, that our blessed Saviour made Choice of Simple Ignorant Fishermen for his Apostles: I only infer, that for Christians so courageously to leave the World, as Religious Men and Women do in the Roman Church, they must certainly be influenced by an extraordinary Grace of God, and animated with

the true Faith, in which such singular Graces are bestow'd upon them.

Consideration XXVIII.

I remember that in my Youth I heard two *Lutheran* Ministers discoursing concerning a young Man of an admirable Disposition, with whom I was very well acquainted. If I be not mistaken, said one of the Ministers to the other, this young Man will never marry. The other made answer: He'll do very well, for Continency and Celibacy is a great Gift, and a singular Grace of God. I, who was then very young and a *Lutheran* too, being amazed at this Answer, began thus to reason the Matter with my self. Since our Ministers stile themselves Reformers of the Church, and Preachers of the pure Gospel, and own that Continency and Celibacy is a great Gift and a singular Grace of God; how comes it to pass, that God bestows not this singular Grace on them? For you'll seldom or never find that the Ministers live unmarried. And how chances it, that this Gift and Grace is bestowed on so many Papists, whom we call Idolaters? For among them there are infinite Numbers of Religious Men and Women

and

and of the Ecclesiasticks, who pass their Lives in a strict Observance of Continency and Chastity. Their Religion must certainly be more acceptable to God, because no Man can be (1) Chaste unless God gives the Grace. When I came to riper Years, I very frequently had this in my Thoughts; and it was one of the Motives that inclined me to the Roman Catholick Faith.

Consideration XXIX.

I read several Authors who had written against the Roman Catholick Religion, and I could not but take Notice, how in all their Arguments they labour to prove, what Catholicks do not deny, but on the contrary allow without any Difficulty. But they hardly touch upon those Points which Catholicks hold for Articles of Faith. For Instance, they will bring you a Multitude of Texts from Scripture, to prove that God only is to be ador'd, and honour'd with divine Worship: When Catholicks are so far from denying it, that they believe it to be a Sin of Idolatry to pay divine Worship to any Creature whatever.

(1) Wisdom 8. 21.

Again, they cite many Places in Scripture, which make honourable mention of Marriage. But what's all this to the Purpose? Catholicks condemn not Marriage; so far from it, that they put it in the Number of Sacraments. Their Doctrine in this particular, amounts to no more than what *St. Paul* has taught them (1) that *He that giveth his Virgin in Marriage, doth well; but he that giveth her not in Marriage, doth better.* Again, they speak much of our Saviour's Merits, and of the Satisfaction he has offer'd for our Sins. But what then? Do not Catholicks likewise teach that our Saviour's Merits are of infinite Value, and that his Satisfaction suffices for the Sins of the whole World? Must this hinder them from giving Ear to the Advice of *St. Peter*, (2) *Brethren give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure by good Works,* (as the Latin Version has it) or that of *St. Paul* (3) *If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him.* The Protestants give us great Encomiums of Faith. And so do the Catholicks; but may

(1) 1 Cor. 7. 38. (2) 2 Epist. 1. 10.

(3) Rom. 8. 17.

12 3 mod W. (1)

they not believe St. James, when he says, (1) ye see then, how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only; Or St. Paul, when he pronounces of himself (2) Though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing? In fine, our Adversaries inveigh most bitterly against the dissolute Lives of some of the Clergy. But how does this better their Cause? Catholicks detest it, as much as they: But then they admire the Generality of them that Angelical Chastity which they preserve both in Body and Soul.

Consideration XXX.

I observed not only in these Authors, but likewise in the Sermons and Discourses, both Publick and Private, of other Ministers, that their main Talent lay in slandering and blackning the Roman Catholick Church. And this alone was enough to persuade me, they were but ill provided with Arguments against her. For when Men in the Heat of their Disputes fling Dirt at their Adversaries, 'tis a certain Sign their Arguments want an Edge. Over and above

(1) James 2. 24.

(2) 1 Cor. 13. 2.

that Calumnies are always made up of Lies and Forgeries. And how is it possible by bare-fac'd Lies to come at Truth? Yet this is the very Case of the Protestants. For Instance, they will have the World to believe, that Catholicks adore the Saints; that they take the Pope for a God, that they put their Hope and Confidence more in their own Merits and in those of the Saints, than in the Merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and a thousand other Stories, without any Foundation, but pure Malice to support them. Now I could not think it rational to ground my Faith upon palpable Lies and Calumnies; and for that Reason I resolv'd to inform myself of the Truth of Things; and having happily found it, I rejected all these new Sects as so many Impostures.

Consideration XXXI.

I remember, that being once present in my Youth, at a Dispute of School Divinity, which was held among the Calvinists, one of the Audience, more knowing than the rest, proposed before all the Company in the Person of a Catholick, an Argument, which so gravell'd the Professor, that it quite silenc'd him

him for a Time. Then to get clear of it, as well as he could, he told us, that, being formerly in *England*, he had proposed the same Difficulty to one of their Doctors, who had no other Answer to give him than that no pertinent Resolution could be made to the Argument, and by consequence that in this Point no direct Answer was to be given to Catholicks, but the only Way was to avoid the Force and Dint of it, by some logical Evasion. This Answer did not a little scandalize me: For it is not by Quirks and Shuffles that Satisfaction can be given to any Argument, nor that the Knowledge of any Truth can be acquired. So that I judged the Protestants took not much to Heart the Truth of Matters, as to Articles of Faith.

Consideration XXXII.

I remark'd likewise another Particular, which gave me a most violent Presumption of the Falsity of all the Sects that have separated from the Roman Catholic Church. Tho' they continually refer Catholicks to the Holy Scripture; as for themselves, they treat it as they think fit. Sometimes they reject whole Books of it, at other Times they dress it

out

out in a false (1) Translation, and all of them expound it to their own Fancies, and make it chime to the Suggestions of their private Spirits. On the contrary, the Roman Catholicks have all the same Version, all make use of the same Books which the Church has used for above thirteen hundred Years; and they understand them not according to their own private Lights, but according to the Sense of the Ancient Fathers, and of the universal Church, to which our blessed Saviour refers us in those Words, (2) *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen and a Publican.*

Consideration XXXIII.

That nothing might pass me without being examined, I attentively perused *Luther's* little Catechism, which the *Lutherans* of *Hungary* make Use of to this Day. I carefully compared it with the Catechism of the same *Luther* printed at *Wirtemberg* in 1567. And I found that in several Articles, it differ'd as much as could be from the first Edition of the same

(1) *Concerning false Translations in the English Bible, see a Book called, The true Church of Christ. p. 137.* (2) *Mat. 18. 17.*

Catechism, printed at *Wirttemberg*. I should never have imagin'd so great an Alteration; had I not remark'd how the pretended Reformers of our Days alter, as the Fancy takes them, the Articles of their Religion; so that some are held in some Countries, which are denied in others; some stild in this Age, which were broach'd in the last; and others broach'd in this, which were not so much as dream'd of in the last. If any Man questions what I say concerning these two Catechisms, I desire he would compare them; which may easily be done, since this Catechism of *Wirttemberg* was reprinted in 1701 at *Tirnavu* in *Hungary*. On the Contrary in my Travels through several Catholick Provinces, I found no Difference among them, as to Articles of Faith, but rather an exact Conformity.

Consideration XXXIV.

Having therefore met with so unaccountable Variety, as to Matters of Faith, among those that would be thought to follow the *Augsbourg* Confession, I resolv'd to read it with all possible Attention. I procur'd several Editions and those of different Times. But I found them so alter'd and inconsistent, that

that I was not able to discover which of them was the Genuine; and no Wonder, since the very Professors of *Lutheran* Universities are at Variance about the Matter. I labour'd under this Uncertainty, till I had the good Fortune, when at *Vienna*, to be admitted one Day with a great many more into the Emperor's Library. There, among other Rarities, his Imperial Majesty's Library-keeper shew'd us the very Original of that Confession, which *Melancthon*, in 1530, presented to *Charles V.* at the Dyet of *Augsbourg*. 'Tis so different from the other Editions, that, did they not bear the Title, no Man would take them for the *Confession of Augsbourg*. From whence I infer that the Religion of our *Lutherans* is not that of the *Augsbourg* Confession, but very different from it, and by Consequence, not worthy to be regarded. But why was I not contented at least with the Original it self? Because it contained a great many Lies and palpable Contradictions, as Cardinal *Pazman* hath clearly prov'd in his Learned Work, called *Kasaux* from page 415. to 440.

Con-

Consideration XXXV.

Having very frequently Meditated on those Words of our Saviour, (1) *Enter ye in at the strait Gate, for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be, which go in thereat, because strait is the Gate and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* And (2) *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate.* I say, having very frequently consider'd these Words, I easily perceiv'd the Religions, contrary to that of the Roman Catholicks, were not this strait Gate which leadeth unto Life; but that they were the wide Gate that leadeth to Destruction. For according to their Doctrine (3) there goes no more to the Gaining of eternal Life, than believing ones self predestin'd to Glory, and that he shall be sav'd. Now certainly this Doctrine can never be reconciled with that of our blessed Saviour and his Apostles. For, when one ask'd Jesus Christ, (4) *Good Master, what good Things shall I*

(1) Matth. 7. 13. 14.

(2) Luke 13. 24.

(3) Calv. Instit. l. 3. c. 2. n. 16 & 24. Antid. Conc. Trid. in Sess. 6. cap. 13. 14. Beza Expos. de la Foy ch. 8. conc. 1.

(4) Matth. 19. 16. 17.

do, that I may have eternal Life? He answer'd, *If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the Commandments.* Whereas our Sectaries, had the Question been put to them, would not have said, if thou shalt enter into Life keep the Commandments, for this they judge impossible; but rather, if thou wilt enter into Life, only believe that Jesus Christ has fulfill'd for thee the Commandments of God the Father. The Jews touch'd with St. Peter's Sermon, ask'd, *What shall we do?* (1) And St. Peter answer'd, *do Penance*, as our Saviour himself had said before (2) *Except ye do Penance, ye shall all likewise perish.* And St. Peter again (3) *Do Penance therefore and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out.* In the same manner did St. John the Baptist begin his Preaching (4) *Do Penance.* --- *Bring forth therefore worthy fruits of Penance.* But what would our new Gospellers answer, were they ask'd by any one, whether, and in what manner Penance ought to be done? They would tell him; *only believe thy Sins are pardon'd thee, through the Merits of Jesus Christ, and that's sufficient.* But should I putt his other

(1) Acts 2. 27. 38.

(2) Luke 13. 3.

(3) Acts 3. 19.

(4) Matth. 3. 2. & 8.

Question to them, am I oblig'd to forgive my Enemy the Injuries he has done me, if I would have God to forgive me my Sins? What would they answer then? Nothing else I suppose, but that it is enough for me to believe that my Sins are forgiven. And yet our Saviour has declar'd (1) *If ye forgive Men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not Men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* I ask farther, whether by good Works I may merit eternal Life? They will answer me in the Negative, and that it is Faith alone that gains it. Yet St. Peter (2) exhorts us by good Works to make our Calling and Election sure. And St. Paul tells us (3) that God will render to every Man according to his Deeds: *Glorie, Honour and Peace to every Man that worketh Good.* And (4) that every Man shall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour. Another Question may be, whether I can rescue my self from the Punishment due to my Sins, by giving Alms? Since our Saviour says, (5) *Give Alms of such Things as you have: And behold, all Things are*

(1) Matth. 6. 14. 15. (2) 2 Pet. 1. 10.
 (3) Rom. 2. 6. 10. (4) 1 Cor. 3. 8.
 (5) Luke 11. 41.

clean unto you. And the Prophet Daniel
 (1) *Break off thy Sins by Alms, and thy Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the poor.* They'll tell me, pursuant to their growndless System, that it is not necessary, only believe that our Saviour has satisfy'd for you, and you'll be without Spot or Blemish: Only believe that Jesus Christ died for you, and you'll get clear of your Sins. Faith alone will do your Work. Lastly, I desire to know, what those Sins are which damn a Soul and exclude it from the Glory of Heaven. St. Paul would answer,
 (2) *Be not deceiv'd; neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards nor Revilers, nor Extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* But our Reformers with their Patriarch Luther (3) will assure me, *that no Sin, but Incredulity, damns a Man.* I appeal to the common Sense and Reason of Mankind, if this be not a new, and

(1) Dan. 4. 27.

(2) 1 Cor 6. 9. 10.

(3) Baptizatus etiam volens non potest perdere salutem suam quantiscunq; peccatis, nisi nolit credere: Nulla enim peccata eum possunt damnare, nisi sola Incredulitas, Cap. Bab. tom. 2. fol. 74. Similia docet, contra Cathar. tom. 2. fol. 136. & Postilla in Dom. 8. post Trin.

wide and spacious Way: And consequently a Way, by which never any Man went to Heaven.

Consideration XXXVI.

On Occasion of this Controversy, viz. whether Faith alone will suffice to save a Man, for the support of which Principle Luther sacrilegiously corrupted that Text of St. Paul (1) *We conclude that a Man is justified by Faith*, and read by *Faith alone*; I began to suspect the Protestants might use the like Deceit in other Texts of Scripture. I therefore resolv'd to inform myself as to this Particular, and I soon found there was but too much Reason for my Suspicion. The same Luther coming to that Text of St. Peter, cited in a foregoing Consideration (2) *Give Diligence by good Works to make your Calling and Election sure*, entirely omits in his Translation those Words, *By good Works*, because they evidently condemn his Error, concerning the Usefulness of good Works in order to Salvation. We read in St. Matthew (3) and St. Mark (4) *Hoc est Corpus meum*, *This is my Body*: But to shut out

(1) Rom. 3. 38.

(2) 2 Pet. 1. 10.

(3) Mat. 26. 26.

(4) Mark 14. 22.

of the Eucharist the real Presence of Christ's Body, the Generality of the Calvinists read it thus: *Hic est Corpus meum, Here is my Body.* For the same Reason, instead of those Words in St. John (1) *I am the living Bread, which came down from Heaven,* they have translated, *I am the Life-giving Bread;* that the Text might the more easily be understood of common Bread. The Roman Catholicks prove the Sacrament of Penance, not only from St. James's Epistle ch. 5. 16. *Confess your Faults one to another, Confitemini ergo alterutrum peccata vestra:* But also very clearly from St. Matth. 16. 19, and St. John 20. 23. The Reformers to get clear of Sacramental Confession, instead of saying with St. James, *Confitemini ergo alterutrum peccata vestra,* say, *Confitemini peccata vestra ad invicem.* Confess the Sins you have committed against each other. St. Paul (2) declares *Marriage honourable in all, Honorable connubium in omnibus.* The Reformers translate it, *Marriage honourable among all, Honorable connubium inter omnes,* to give a Sanction to the Marriages of Priests. Jesus Christ says (3) *Come ye*

(1) John 6. 51.

(3) Matth. 25. 34. 35.

(2) Heb. 13. 3.

blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom
 prepared for you from the Foundation of the
 World. For I was Hungry, and ye gave me
 Meat, I was Thirsty, and ye gave me Drink;
 I was a Stranger and ye took me in, &c.
 Luther in his Translation omits FOR ;
 because he knew that Catholicks proved
 from hence good Works to be Meritori-
 ous of eternal Life. I omit a great many
 other Forgeries of the like Nature ;
 which convinc'd me that the Heads of
 all our new Sects taught not the Way of
 God in Truth, but that they tortured the
 Holy Scripture to make it speak their
 own private Sense, and clip'd it, as they
 thought convenient. How therefore
 could I think it Prudence to adhere to
 their Religion ?

Consideration XXXVII.

After this, I made a kind of Scrutiny
 towards a Discovery of the true Church
 of Jesus Christ, from those that falsely
 pretend to be so: And I did it in this
 manner. There is somewhere in the
 Christian World a true Church of Jesus
 Christ. All Religions and Sects what-
 ever admit this Proposition, excepting
 those Hereticks who are call'd *Expectants*.
 If there be a true Church of Jesus Christ,
 it

it must have been founded by Jesus Christ himself; and, by consequence, according to the Principles of Wisdom, since her Founder is the Eternal Wisdom it self. Now if this Church was *wisely* founded, she was founded in such a manner, as to be sure of a constant and perpetual Being, pursuant to that Maxim of our Saviour (1) *Whosoever beareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise Man which built his House upon a Rock: and the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House; and it fell not for it was founded on a Rock.* And it is of this House our Saviour speaks, when he says (2) *Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* If she stands on so firm a Foundation, it is not possible for her to fail or fall, either by the Rains of Afflictions, or by the Torrents of Persecutions, or by the Winds of Heresies; otherwise we must say, it was built on a Sand and not on a Rock: And if it cannot fail, it must always have been visible. Besides, that it would have been to no purpose for our Saviour to

(1) Matth. 7. 24. 25.

(2) Matth. 16. 18.

have given this Rule to his Faithful: (1) *Tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican.* For how can the Faithful tell or propose a thing to a Church invisible and no where to be found? If she was visible to all the Faithful, her Limits must have been extended by the Apostles after the Ascension of Jesus Christ, pursuant to those Orders he gave them. (2) *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature.* Which they faithfully complied withal, as we learn from the same Evangelist. (3) *And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.* Now since the Apostles carried the Faith on all sides, and that the Truth was preach'd through all the World, the Church was certainly *Universal*, that is to say, *Catholic*; and if *Universal*, she was likewise *One*. For which Reason we are told (4) *There shall be one Fold* (5) *one Body*; (6) *one Body and one Spirit.* And if the Church be one Body and one Spirit, she ought

(1) Matth. 18. 17.

(2) Mark 16. 15.

(3) Ibid. 20. 10.

(4) John 10. 16.

(5) Rom. 12. 4.

(6) Ephes. 4. 4.

to have one Head, and therefore it was fit, that Jesus Christ, when he ascended to Heaven, should leave some one of his Apostles, to be the visible Head of this Church. And who was this, but St. Peter to whom our Saviour said (1) *Thou art Simon the Son of Jona: Thou shalt be call'd Cephas, which is by Interpretation, a Rock: And afterwards* (2) *Feed my Lambs: --- Feed my Sheep: And in another place* (3) *And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church: --- And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* Peter therefore was constituted the Head of the visible Church founded by Jesus Christ. And because Peter was not to live for ever, whereas the Church was to continue to the World's end, according to that Promise of our Saviour, (4) *Behold I am with you all days, even unto the end of the World;* he was to have Successors in his unlimited pastoral Care and in Christian Doctrine, and these were likewise to have theirs. From whence it follows, that this continual Succession of Pastors and Doctrine is annex'd to

(1) John 1. 42.

(2) John 21. 15. 16. 17.

(3) Matth. 16. 18. 19.

(4) Matth. 28. 20.

the true Church of Jesus Christ. But because *Peter* and his Successors could not preach in Person to all the World, they were to have fellow Labourers in this sacred Ministry ; for which Reason Christ (1) gave to his Church some *Apostles* ; and some *Prophets* ; and some *E-vangelists* ; and some, *Pastors* and *Teachers* ; for the perfecting of the *Saints*, for the work of the *Ministry*, for the edifying of the body of *Christ* ; till we come in the unity of the *Faith* ; unto a perfect *Man*, unto the measure of the *Stature* of the fullness of *Christ* ; That we henceforth be no more *Children* of *Sin* ; to and fro, and carried about with every wind of *Doctrine*, by the slight of *Men*, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. In fine, since Jesus Christ has call'd us to his Church for that same End, which *St. Paul* recommends to us in the same Chapter (2) Put on the new *Man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, the Church of Jesus Christ must be *Holy*, that is to say, she must, by her *Doctrine*, encourage *Holiness* and among her *Children* have some at least remarkable for *Holiness*. But where shall we find this Church foun-

(1) Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14.

(2) Ibid. 24.

ded by our Saviour, and by his Apostles spread over all the World, if it be not the Roman Catholick? For this it was, that the Holy Apostles *Peter* and *Paul* founded and enlarg'd at *Rome*. The Faith of *Rome* was the same with that of the Apostles, and of *St. Paul* in particular, who writing to the Romans (1) says that their Faith was his: Therefore she was *Apostolical*. This same Faith as he testifies in the same Chapter (2) was preach'd throughout the World: therefore she was *Catholick* or Universal. She was built upon a Rock, therefore she cannot fail: She has always been and is to this Day *visible*. All Nations upon leaving Paganism came into her Pale. 'Tis she, that has had a continual Succession of chief Pastors from *St. Peter* to *Clement XI.* the present Pope. In all Parts of the Earth she holds exactly the same Rule of Faith, therefore she is *one*. She has had an infinite Number of Saints of both Sexes, of Martyrs of Confessors and of Virgins. She teaches her Children the way of Holiness, to fly from Evil, and to do Good, she is therefore *Holy*; by consequence she inherits

(1) Rom. 1. 12.

(2) Ibid. 8.

the true Faith, and Religion, and is the true Church of Jesus Christ ; if she is the true, I infer she is the only Church, and that no other has a Title to our Obedience.

Consideration XXXVIII.

Let it farther be consider'd that all the Religions that are at Variance with the Roman Catholick, in general and in particular, are likewise, as to Doctrine and Pointsof Faith, at Variance among themselves. They cannot then be *one* Church. They were not preach'd by the Apostles, but were trump'd up a great many Ages after them ; therefore they are not *Apostolical*. They have not obtain'd over all the World, but only in a few Provinces, and those in Europe only ; they cannot therefore pass for the *Catholick* or *Universal* Church : They cannot trace the Succession of their Pastors and their Doctrine any higher, than to *Luther* and *Calvin* ; by consequence they have not from the Apostles a continual Succession of their Ministry or their Doctrine. They cannot name one Saint, who has been their Follower : They do not teach us to fly from Evil, and to do Good ; but, on the contrary, they maintain,

tain, that this is impossible and nothing to the purpose. How then can they be reputed a *Holy Church*? And since they have none of the Marks of the true Church of Christ, it follows, that all of them in general and in particular are to be rejected.

Consideration XXXIX.

It often happens, that in Disputes between Roman Catholicks and their Adversaries, the Question is not concerning the Text of Scripture, that is to say, whether the Book, out of which the Text is taken, be Canonical; or whether the Translation be good and faithful; but only concerning the true Sense and Meaning of the Text. The Roman Catholicks own it their Obligation to expound the Scripture according to the Sense of the Primitive Church, and of the ancient Fathers. The Protestants forge new Interpretations, not only contrary to that of the Primitive Church and of the ancient Holy Fathers, but also contrary to each other, according as their private Spirit directs them. And in Cases of this Nature I have often been at a stand, and doubted for some time which of these Expositions and Interpretations

tations it were best to follow. But upon mature Deliberation, my Reason dictated, that the Exposition of the Roman Catholicks deserved the Preference, as being more agreeable to that of the whole Primitive Church and of the ancient Holy Fathers; first, because no Man can doubt, but the universal Authority of the whole Primitive Church carries greater Weight than the Authority of a few Particulars, and of a later Date; secondly, because the Holy Fathers, for Sanctity, for Solidity of Doctrine, and for Diligence in seeking after Truth, were beyond Comparison, more to be admired than the volatill Wits of our Innovators, who thro' Want of an extensive Knowledge, and purely to indulge their Passions, have strangely disfigured the Church of God. Over and above that, these Holy Fathers lived nearer to the Days of the Apostles, some of them having been their Contemporaries, or at least their immediate Successors; so that they had certainly greater Lights toward a right Understanding of the Holy Scriptures than the pretended Reformers of our Days can boast of, who come so many Ages after them. Lastly, because the Interpretation of the Holy

Fathers was antecedent to the Disputes, which have of late been set on foot between Catholicks and Protestants, so that their Judgments were no ways biass'd by Interest or by Passion. Whereas the Sectaries of our Days being prepossess'd in Favour of one Side of the Controversy, endeavour to turn, or to speak more properly, to torture the Scriptures to their private Sentiments, instead of squaring their Sentiments to the Scriptures.

Consideration XL.

But to set the Matter in its clearest Light, let us come to an Example. These Words of our Blessed Saviour, *Hoc est Corpus meum, This is my Body*, the Roman Catholicks understand in their proper and literal Sense, because they were never otherwise understood by the ancient Fathers or the Catholick Church. The Protestants will not allow of this Sense. But then the *Lutherans* understand them one Way, and the *Calvinists* another; and again, the *Zuinglians* one Way, and the *Arians* another. And each of these hath no other Rule for his Interpretation than the Dictate of his private Spirit. To which therefore of these

these private Spirits could I most securely adhere? Or which of their Interpretations was I bound to receive? As I could not find that any of them had a better Reason than the rest, to support his Sense, I judg'd it impossible to make a Choice. For Truth, whatsoever its Object be, is *One*, whereas Falshood wears several Masks, and holds no Intelligence with Sincerity. To my thinking therefore it was much the best to follow in this Point the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, because it offer'd me the best Security.

Consideration XLI.

For the more perfect Discovery of the Truth I sought after, I resolv'd to read the most celebrated Authors of both Parties, that I might be able to judge how far their Doctrine agreed with that of the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church, and whether in all Points they agreed among themselves. And therefore it was that I perus'd a great many Books written by Roman Catholicks of divers Nations, as well Spaniards, Italians, Flandrians, and English, as Germans, Polanders and Hungarians; and the Issue of this Enquiry was, that

I found a perfect Harmony among them as to Points of Faith; and their Defe-
 rence to the ancient Fathers. It was
 Matter of Admiration to me, that their
 Schoolmen, who widely differ'd in Opi-
 nion as to other Subjects, should all as
 with one Voice profess, maintain and
 teach the very same as to what concerns
 the Articles of Faith. I observed the
 like in the Writings of the ancient Holy
 Fathers, tho' they lived and writ in
 Times and Places very distant from one
 another, as *Ignatius* and *Chrysostome* at
Antioch, *Athanasius* and *Telesphorus* at
Alexandria, *Macarius* and *Cyril* at *Jeru-*
salem, *Proclus* at *Constantinople*, *Gregory*
 and *Basil* in *Cappadocia*, *Justin* at *Athens*,
Dennis at *Corinth*, *Ephrom* in *Syria*, *Cy-*
prian, *Optatus* and *Augustin* in *Africk*,
Epiphanius in *Cyprus*, *Ambrose* in *Italy*,
Irenaeus in *France*, *Orosius* and *Isidore* in
Spain, *Bede* in *England*, &c. But when
 I came to confront the Writings of our
 new Reformers with the Doctrine of the
 ancient Fathers, I found them as oppo-
 site as East and West. In the next Place
 I examined what Harmony these Prote-
 stant Writers kept among themselves,
 but I clearly discover'd they were migh-
 tily at Jars, about Points of Faith. 'Tis
 not

not only the *Lutherans* that quarrel with the *Calvinists*; and the *Calvinists* with the *Lutherans*; and both of them with the *Puritans*, *Arians* and *Anabaptists*; but even those of the same Cloth, are strangely at Variance about their Faith. The rigid *Calvinists* are of one perswasion, and the more moderate of another. The Remonstrants teach one thing, and the Anti-remonstrants teach the contrary. The *Puritans* maintain and teach what the Presbyterians will not allow. And as for the *Lutherans*, some things are held to be of Faith at *Wirtemberg*, others at *Lantsberg*, others in Sweden, others in *Hungary* others in *Brandenburg*, and others in *England*. Besides that the *Lutherans* follow, in the Age we now live in, a Doctrine, they were strangers to in the foregoing Age. They taught and believ'd one thing at the beginning of *Lutheranism*, and another thing in its Progress. What Account then should I be able to give at the last Day; if to so many great Lights of the Church, I preferr'd a Handful of inconsiderable Men, who have neither their Learning nor their Virtue, and are over and above so divided among themselves? I therefore judg'd it best, to set these all aside, and to keep to the Fathers. D 5 *Con-*

Consideration XLII.

But, tho' the Holy Fathers had been all silent, the very Stones and Remnants of Antiquity spoke to me, attested and recommended the Truth of the Roman Catholick Faith. For upon taking into Consideration the old Churches, the Elections of Kings and Emperors and the Ceremonies used at their Coronation, the ancient Statutes of *Cæsars*, and of Monarchs, the Laws and Customs of the most ancient Universities, the Conversion of Nations to the Faith of Christ, the Inscriptions cut in Marble, the Histories and Annals of all Ages since the Birth of our Redeemer; all the memorable Facts that have happen'd since the first Promulgation of the Christian Faith, the Journals and Calendars wherein are mark'd the illustrious Actions of the Saints, and the most solemn Days of the Year, which are still in Use among the Protestants themselves, as the *Sundays* call'd, *Quadragesima*, *Quinquagesima*, *Sexagesima*, *Septuagesima*, *Easter*, *Quasimodo*, *Jubilate*, *Cantate*, *Rogate*, &c. All these things gave me clearly to understand, that no other Religion beside the Roman Catholick was ever firmly planted

in the Christian World, So that I had convincing Reasons, not to separate from Antiquity, nor to adhere to any of these Novelties, that bear so fresh Date.

Consideration XLIII.

For near the space of seventeen hundred Years the Roman Catholick Church has been attack'd by *Pagans* and *Gentiles*, by cruel Tyrants, by *Mahometans*, by *Schismaticks* and innumerable Heresies, without being worsted; and to this Day she defends herself courageously and invincibly, in a visible and flourishing Condition. Nay she is daily on the Increase, and extends her Limits wider and wider. On the contrary, so many Heresies, and of so many different sorts, which appear'd formidable for Strength and Power, and spread like so many rapid Torrents, have perish'd, disappear'd and quite vanish'd away. As for Instance, the Heresies of the *Manichees*, the *Donatists*, the *Pelagians*, the *Iconoclasts*, and a great many more. Now what can I infer from hence, but that the Roman Catholick Church was built by Jesus Christ upon a Rock, and that it was of Her our Saviour prophesied, when he said, (1) *The Gates of Hell shall not pre-*

vail against it: But that all the Sects have by Men been built upon a Sand, that the Rain has fall'n, the Rivers have overflow'd, and the Winds have risen, that they came upon those Sects and overturn'd them, and made strange *Havock*. And I may add, that they destroy'd themselves, and that those of later Growth will in Time meet with the same Fate, according to that Principle of our Blessed Saviour, (1) *Every Plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up*. For these Reasons I chose rather to take shelter in the House which was built upon a Rock, than in that which was built on the Sand, and threatned me with its approaching Ruin.

Consideration XLIV.

I have frequently with great Attention view'd the Libraries both of Catholicks and Protestants; and in those of the Catholicks remark'd three sorts of Books placed into many Cells or Classes of a considerable Length, of which Books I could not find the least Appearance in the Libraries of the Protestants. The first Class of these Catholicks Books had for its Title,

(1) St. Matth. 15. 13.

The Lives of Saints. Great Numbers there were of them, of every State; among the rest an Infinity of Holy Virgins; there were also the Histories of Holy Widows, Bishops, Hermits, Religious of both Sexes, Martyrs, Apostolical Men, Saintly Kings, and other Holy Confessors, whose Lives contain'd their admirable and heroick Virtues, their Innocence and godly Conversation, their Piety towards God, and Charity towards their Neighbours, and all the Perfections of a Christian Life. I thought, and thought again of what I saw, and my Reason told me, that that must certainly be the true Religion, which abounded with so many virtuous Persons: For we are told (1) That *a corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good Fruit --- Wherefore by their Fruits ye shall know them.* Now all these virtuous Persons, said I to my self, lived and died in the Roman Catholick Faith; what then can I infer, but that this is the true Faith?

The second Class of these Books were what the Roman Catholicks call *Spiritual Books*, which abounded with solid Doctrine concerning the Exercise of Virtue

(1) St. Matth. 7. 18. 20

and of Christian Perfection. They treated of the Imitation of Jesus Christ; of the contempt and vanity of the World; of the Love of God and our Neighbour; of loving our Enemies and pardoning Injuries; of humility of Heart; of perfect Chastity and angelical Purity both of Body and Soul; of Conformity to the Will of God; of Meditation on the four last Things; of the Enormity of Sin; and of the Practice of Devotion, and of all other Virtues.

The third Class had for its Title *Moral Divines*, who treated at large of the Decalogue and Divine Laws, of the Restitution of ill-gotten Goods, of the Reparation of Damages done to a Neighbour, of the Use of the Sacraments, and the Requisites to a due Administration of them; in fine, of all Things belonging to the Direction of Consciences.

As to the Libraries of Protestants, I met with nothing of this Nature in their Books. * No Lives of *their Saints*, because no Saints in their Communion: No *Spiritual Books*, because their Books have nothing conducive to Christian Perfection; nay, they are Strangers to the

* He speaks of Germany.

very Name. No *Imitation* of Jesus Christ, for they judge it a Thing impossible. No *Exercise of Virtues* nor of good Works, which they think unnecessary for the gaining of Salvation. Nothing of Chastity, nor of Conscience; the very Name is hateful to them. Nothing of *doing Penance*, for, according to them, there goes no more to the gaining of Heaven, than the believing that our Saviour has satisfy'd his heavenly Father for our Sins. Nothing, infine, of *Moral Divinity*, for they hold that it is not possible to keep the Commandments, that all Sins are equally enormous, that the Sins of the Predestinate are not reputed Sins in the Sight of God, and that no Man shall be damn'd, save only for the Sin of Infidelity. I might add many more Particulars, which Flesh and Blood have suggested to them, and which never descended from the Father of Light; so that they cannot be improv'd into Principles of a spiritual Life; but, on the contrary, are the Sources of an animal and brutish Life, of a general depravation of Manners, and so many Inlets to the very worst Effects of Libertinism and Concupiscence.

Consideration XLV.

I likewise set their Conventicles (those especially, in which the Confessions of *Augsbourg, Swizzerland, Geneva* and *England* were first minted) against the ancient general Councils of the Roman Catholick Church. But what comparison could there be between Light and Darknes? The Custom of the Roman Catholick Church is to invite to a general Council the Bishops from all Parts of the World, the most learned Divines of every Nation, the Embassadors of Emperors and Kings; where Matters are discussed with the greatest Exactness and Deliberation, Decrees drawn up by unanimous Consent upon the Points in Question, and these universally accepted by the Faithful. The Councils too, are held for a considerable Time, now and then for several Years, to the end that Matters may be more thoroughly examin'd and set in their clearest Light; and by this Means be so well fix'd, as never after to be call'd in Question. But what can be said for those Assemblies of the adverse Party, for instance, for that

that of *Augsbourg* (1) which gave Birth to the Confession of that Name? The Compilers of it were a small Parcel of Men, that had scarcely a Tincture of Divinity; they set about it with precipitation; and finished it in haste, and in a publick Ale-house too. A few *German*s were all that Assisted at it, without the Concurrence of any single Man from other Nations, Persons already sower'd with Prejudices, swell'd with Pride, and abandon'd to a sensual and voluptuous Life. Few Towns and Princes receiv'd it, the greatest Part rejected it; and it has several Times been alter'd and reform'd. When I had well consider'd how Things went on both Sides, I thought it a necessary Piece of Prudence, as to the Regulating of my Faith, rather to follow the Judgment of Catholick Councils, than the hasty Resolutions of such tumultuous Assemblies.

Consideration XLVI.

The Conscience of Catholicks and that of Protestants were the Subject of this *Consideration*.

(1) See *Monsr. Meaux's History of Variations*, Lib. 3.

Conscience is an Act of the Understanding or Reason, which dictates to us that a Thing is lawful or unlawful, and by consequence, that it is to be done or left undone. So that Conscience is the immediate and nearest Rule of our Will. Let us then consider those Rules, which are recommended by Catholicks on the one Hand, and by Protestants on the other.

The Catholicks give these,

1. 'Tis our Obligation to avoid Sin of what kind soever it be; and God has left it in the Power of Man's Free-Will, to sin, or not to sin.

2. Every mortal Sin deserves everlasting Torment; and any one Sin of this kind is enough to damn us.

3. A Sin ought not to be committed upon any Account: Insomuch that it were better a thousand Times to die, than to fall into Sin, were it never so small.

4. We must give an Account, to God of the least Sin, though it be but an idle Word.

5. A Sin of Injustice is incapable of Pardon, unless Restitution be made, or

at least intended, according to our Power.

6. After the Commission of a mortal Sin, nothing remains but either Hell or Penance.

7. Every good Action of super-natural Order merits Glory, and super-natural Grace with its Increase.

8. All our Mortal Sins must be confess'd to a Priest, who has Power to hear and to absolve us.

There are many other Rules of the like Nature. Let us now consider those that arise from Protestant Doctrine.

1. The Commandments of God are impossible. No Man can keep them.

2. Every one must firmly believe that he is predestin'd to be saved.

3. God imputes no Sin to such as have his special Faith.

4. No Sin, but that of Infidelity, damns Man.

5. Good Works are not meritorious in the Sight of God, of eternal Life.

6. There's no need of our doing Penance for our Sins, because Jesus Christ already by his Blood and Death has satisfied for us.

7. It is not in our Power to avoid

8. None

8. None is obliged to confess his Sins. Faith alone is sufficient to save us, &c.

Let any Man now judge what Conscience he is likely to frame out of these Principles, toward shunning of Evil, and doing good. Whereas the Rules drawn from the Catholick Doctrine have no other Aim, and are evidently design'd for Practice. Upon the Comparison I was fully convinc'd, that for the Safety of my Conscience, it would be best to follow the Rules of Catholicks, and to be ware of those of Protestants.

Consideration XLVII.

Nothing so much displeased me in the Ministers, as their continual declaiming in all their Sermons against the Catholicks, and especially their scoffing at Rites and Ceremonies, while they wilfully dissemble those Points, which are of the greatest Importance in their own Religion, and wherein the People's Salvation is deeply concern'd. As, that they are not really Priests, since they have not the Power to consecrate the Eucharist, nor to forgive Sins, which is yet the main Office of Priestly Dignity. So that the People are shamefully deceived by these Ministers, who make them

them believe they receive under the two Species the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, when for want of Priestly Power in their Preachers, they receive him not under either, but barely Bread and Wine. without any Addition whatsoever. They likewise perswade their Followers that they teach nothing, but what the Primitive Church and the Holy Fathers held and taught, which is absolutely false, as they (1) know in their own Consciences. (2) They don't teach them to fly Sin, nor to do Penance for the Sins they have committed; neither do they exhort them to well-doing or to live in a Christian Conformity to the Doctrine and Example of our Blessed Saviour.

Consideration XLVIII.

In my Conversation with Catholicks, I observed their Judgment as to bad and

(1) *Luther de Serv. Arbitr. tom. 2. fol. 438, 480. In cap. 21. Genes. tom. 6. fol. 254. Cont. Reg. Angl. tom. 2. fol. 344. 347. Zuinglius Declar. de Pec. Originali. Calvin. Tract. de Reform. Eccles. Opusc. pag. 781.*

(2) *A Person of our Author's Tears and good Sense would never have charged these Defects on the Ministers in Germany, had he not known them by long Experience.*

loose Catholicks, that they look'd upon all those as such, that neglected God's Commandments, that took no Care to do good Works, that declin'd Confession, that seldom assisted at the Holy Mass, or approach'd to the Sacrament of Penance, that ran in pursuit of sensual Pleasures, that observed not the Days set apart for Fasting, &c. Then I cast my Eyes on the Protestants, and found, that all these Things apart, Persons might have the Reputation of pious and fervent Protestants; I inferr'd, that bad Catholicks therefore were at least as good as the best Protestants; and I was confirm'd in my Opinion of what I had formerly dearned, viz. that a bad Catholick makes an excellent Lutheran; a bad Lutheran makes an excellent Calvinist; a bad Calvinist makes an excellent Arian, and a bad Arian makes an excellent Mahometan.

Consideration. XLIX.

What yet forwarded my Conversion, was the Remark I made, that no Catholick ever turn'd Protestant in order to reform his Manners and to live a better Life, but meerly out of a Love for worldly Liberty, and that he might indulge

dulge his Passions without constraint. For I never saw any Religious Man or Priest Apostatize, that did not make it his first Care to procure a Wife. On the other side I observed, that those, who from Protestants return'd to the Roman Catholick Faith, became Devout and Fervent, Zealous and Exemplary, and that very many of them renounced the World, on purpose to dedicate themselves entirely to God in some Religious State. *Even (1) so every good Tree bringeth forth good Fruit: But a corrupt Tree bringeth forth evil Fruit.*

It likewise seem'd very strange, that notwithstanding so many Texts of Scripture concerning the Necessity and Advantage of Charity, Hope, Fear of God, Alms and of other good Works, the Protestants yet should teach that Faith alone is sufficient to save us, tho' they meet with no such Thing in the Holy Scriptures. For as we find this Encomium of Faith, (2) that *Abraham believed in God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness*; so we read in commendation of Hope. (3) *Great Plagues remain for the*

(1) St. Mat. 7. 17.

(2) Rom. 4. 3.

(3) Psal. 32. 11.

ungodly: But who so putteth his Trust in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every Side. (1) Thou that art the Saviour of them which put their trust in thee. (2) Hope maketh not ashamed. (3) And every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Of Charity, (4) Her Sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much. (5) For Charity shall cover the multitude of Sins.

Of the Observance of God's Commandments, (6) If thou wilt enter into Life keep the Commandments.

Of other good Works, (7) If thou doest well, shall thou not be rewarded? (8) All that are in the Graves --- shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life. (9) Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was Hungry and ye gave me Meat: I was Thirsty and ye gave me Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me in, &c.

(1) Psal. 17. 7.

(2) Rom. 5. 5.

(3) 1 John 3. 3.

(4) St. Luke 7. 47.

(5) 1 Pet. 4. 8.

(6) St. Matth. 19. 17.

(7) Gen. 4. 7.

(8) St. John 5. 29.

(9) St. Matth. 25. 34, 35, 36.

Of Penance, (1) *Except ye do Penance, ye shall all likewise Perish.*

Of Mercy, (2) *By mercy and truth Iniquity is purged.* (3) *Blessed are the merciful: For they shall obtain mercy.*

Of Alms, (4) *they deliver from all Sin and Death.* (5) *Give Alms of such Things as you have: And behold, all Things are clean unto you.*

Of pardoning Injuries, (6) *Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.* (7) *For if ye forgive Men their Trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*

I therefore concluded, my safest Way was to embrace the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, which teaches indeed that Faith is necessary to Salvation, but yet excludes not Hope, nor Charity, nor other good Works. For, as St. Paul teaches, (8) *Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three [Virtues] but the greatest of these is Charity.* (9) *And tho' I have all Faith [possible] so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am Nothing.* Now if all these Truths be unque-

(1) St. Luke 13. 5

(2) Prov. 16. 6.

(3) St. Matth. 5. 7.

(4) Tob. 4. 11.

(5) St. Luke 11. 41.

(6) St. Luke 6. 37.

(7) St. Matth. 6. 14.

(8) 1 Cor. 13.

(9) Ibid. 2.

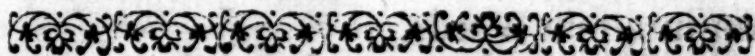
tionable, as all must own they are, it follows, that *Faith alone* will never bring me to Salvation. By Consequence, 'tis false to say, that all other good Works are of no Advantage towards this great End; and a more horrible Mistake yet to say they are all Sins, and therefore not only useless to the Business of Salvation, but so many Steps towards everlasting Misery and Damnation. (1)

Consideration L.

I observed how several Protestants, who had seem'd for many Years to be fixt in their Perswasion, were converted toward the End of their Days, and desired to die in the Roman Catholick Faith. But never did I meet with any Catholick, that wish'd to die in any other Religion. Now 'tis chiefly at the Hour of Death that the Soul opens its Eyes into a clearer Prospect of things Eternal. For my own Part, I intended to live, as I

(1) Luther *de Serv. Arbitr.* tom. 2. fol. 453. Si pij bonum operarentur propter regnum obtinendum nunquam obtinerent. *In cap. 2. ad Gal.* tom. 5. fol. 232. Omnia opera, etiam sacratissime Legis Dei adeo non prestant Justitiam, ut etiam Peccata sint, & hominem pejorem faciant coram Deo.

should wish to die. And for that Reason I came to a Resolution to embrace immediately the Catholick Faith; because Death is as certain, as its Hour is uncertain. Besides, that the Catholicks, to whom I spoke concerning my Conversion, assured me, that if I were to be damned for embracing the Catholick Faith, they were ready to answer for me at the Day of Judgment, and to take my Damnation upon themselves: An Assurance, I could never extort from the Ministers of any Sect, in Case I should live and die in their Religion. Whence I inferr'd that the Roman Catholick Faith was built upon a better Foundation, than any of those Sects that have divided from it.



The Conclusion : Or a Review of the Motives, and Reasons, why the Roman Catholick Faith ought to be chosen and embrac'd preferably to all other Religions this Day in Christendom.

TO THE
S E C T A R I E S.

THink not, my dear Friends, that I rashly and inconsiderately abandon'd the Errors of your Party, to embrace the Roman Catholick Faith, out of any Prospect of Worldly Advantage. No, it was purely out of a Concern for my Salvation, and after mature Deliberation, that I did it, as you may judge from these Motives, which I shall sum up in a few Words.

I. You *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* pretend to establish an Evangelical State. This seems to me as impossible, as for the East and West Winds to blow from the same Quarter. For so long as you hold several Articles of Faith directly opposite to one another, I shall never be able

able to comprehend, how the jarring Doctrine of your two Religions can hold Intelligence with the Gospel. Things different from each other, can never square with any Third; as we learn from the Dictates of common Sense.

2. If one of these two Religions be conformable to the Gospel, and by consequence *Evangelical*, for Example, the *Lutheran*; it must have Arguments on its Side, which the Calvinist Religion cannot equally make use of to prove it self *Evangelical*: And so on the other Side. Now no such Arguments were ever pro'uc'd, what Reason then cou'd I have to profess my self a *Lutheran* rather than a *Calvinist*; or a *Calvinist* rather than a *Lutheran*; or, infine, to believe the one Party more *Evangelical* than the other?

3. I have never been able to learn, upon what Account the *Lutherans* alone call themselves *Evangelical*, or why the *Calvinists* stile themselves the *Reformed Religion*. Nor can it enter into my Head, why the *Anabaptists*, the new *Arians*, and the *Unitarians* may not with as good a Grace assume to themselves the same Appellation. For *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* have nothing to say in their own De-

fence, but what these with equal colour of Reason will plead in Favour of their Sects. As therefore no better Arguments appear to support the Cause of *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, than for that of the *Anabaptists*, the *Arians* and of all those other Sects, to which *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* deny the Privilege of these new-coin'd Titles; by a Parity of Reason the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* deserve not to be call'd *Evangelical*, or the *Reformed Religion*, either in Regard of the Thing, or of the Denomination. So that I had just Grounds to reject these Sects, as being all built upon weak Foundations, and equally of no Account.

4. I knew for certain, as you your selves confess, that a great many of those who lived and died in the Roman Catholick Faith, were saved. Whereas you are wholly ignorant, whether any one of your Followers enjoys that State of Happiness: I acted therefore the part of a prudent Christian, when I took the surest Way to Heaven.

5. From hence also I inferr'd that the Roman Catholick was the true Faith, because without Faith it is impossible to please God. For, whosoever is saved,
plea-

pleaseth God. Therefore since so many Professors of the Roman Catholick Faith have attained Salvation, it must of Necessity be the true and sanctifying Faith.

6. I inferr'd again, that, if the Roman Catholick was the true and sanctifying Faith, all the Religions must be false, that oppose it. For there is but one true sanctifying Faith, as there is but one true God.

7. It is the Judgment of Protestants as well as of Catholicks, that Salvation may be had in the Faith of the Roman Church; but none besides Protestants are of Opinion that it may be had in another Religion. This all Protestants, of what Denomination soever, affirm of every individual Sect; and Catholicks as positively deny it. Now a thing agreed upon by two opposite Parties, is unquestionably more certain, than what's affirm'd by the one, and denied by the other. As therefore I desir'd to go upon the surest Grounds, I acted the Part of a reasonable Man in preferring the Roman Catholick Faith to all other Religions.

8. Upon consulting what the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church have

left us in their Writings concerning Faith, I found they praised, extolled and recommended no other than the Roman Catholick, and rejected and condemn'd all that separated from it, wherefore I resolv'd to follow their prudent Counsels and solid Sentiments.

9. All the Saints we have had from the Infancy of the Church to these our Days, liv'd in the *Roman Catholick Church*.

10. In Defence of the Truths deposited with this Church, so many thousands of Martyrs gave their Lives, and triumphed over Death, tho' it attack'd them with the sharpest Torments.

11. All that ever fought against this Church in their Separation from it, as *Arius, Pelagius, Marcion, Macedonius, Mahomet, &c.* with their Followers, burn in the Everlasting Flames of Hell. *Luther, Calvin,* and the like Innovators of these latter Days, were equally Arch-Hereticks. So that to take them for my Guides, were to run a Risque of eternal Damnation.

12. The Faith of the Church of Rome, was that of St. Paul, as this Apostle tells us in his Epistle to the *Romans*, chap. 1.

2. And why should I lose my Time in

in seeking any other Faith than that of this great Apostle?

13. Were I not by the Grace of God fix'd in the Faith of the Roman Catholick Church, these other Religions would so perplex and puzzle my Thoughts in making a Choice, that I should never be able to make it with any Peace of Mind. For I should always have Reason to doubt, which, among so many different Religions, was the true and sanctifying Faith.

14. In all other Religions, are found such incredible Paradoxes, as can never be reconciled to the Principles of right Reason. This is shewn in the *Considerations*, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18.

19. All the Religions which now oppose the Roman Catholick, are of a new Invention; in so much that before the Year 1517, they were neither held nor taught, nor follow'd by any Man upon the whole Face of the Earth. This is prov'd in *Considerations*, 19, 20.

21. These new Religions are no other than so many unwholesom Compositions, out of Heresies from Time to Time condemn'd by the Church of God.

22. The Roman Catholick Church is the only One, which retains the true

Marks of the Church of Jesus Christ, viz. that She is *One, Holy, Apostolical and Catholick or Universal.*

23. 'Tis the only Religion, for which all Nations renounced, and still in these very Days renounce Paganism and Idolatry.

24. The Heads of these new Religions were never able to work the least Miracle in proof of their Commission from Almighty God, to reform his Church.

25. On the contrary, they were a company of Libertines, Vow-breakers, Apostates, impious Blasphemers and Men of no Account.

26. The Adherents of these Religions have never labour'd in the Conversion of Idolaters, but only in making Profelytes of the worst of Catholicks.

27. In the Roman Catholick Religion great Numbers of both Sexes, of illustrious Birth and of plentiful Estates and Fortunes do freely consecrate themselves to God's Service, and pass their Lives in voluntary Poverty, and in Angelical Purity. In the other Religions we find none (*) distinguish'd by their Birth and

(*) He speaks of Germany.

Quality, that put themselves in the Rank of Ministers; and of these 'tis a Rarity to find one that embraces a Life of Continency; an evident Proof, that the Necessity of gaining a Livelihood is their only Motive in taking to that State. Whereas in the Roman Catholick Religion, 'tis a Love of God, a Concern for their Salvation, and a lively and true Faith which animates such Numbers of devout Persons entirely to devote themselves to the Service of Almighty God.

28. Continency that singular Gift of God, is not bestow'd upon the Protestant Ministers, as it is upon so many religious Men and Women in the Roman Catholick Religion, who by the Grace of God, live not only in a State of Continency, but in that of a pure Virginity without Spot or Blemish.

29. Protestant Writers in most of their Arguments against Catholicks encounter without an Enemy, while they labour to overthrow what no Body maintains against them. But they seldom touch upon any Point of Doctrine, which is really taught by Catholicks. Because their whole Aim in their Invectives, is to create an Aversion to the Romans in the Hearts of those they have debauch'd from the Church of *Christ*.

30. The

30. The Arms of Protestants against the Catholicks are Calumnies, foul Language and barefac'd Lies, without any one solid Argument to support the Charge.

31. Neither can they answer Catholick Arguments ; but by some Evasion elude the Force of them ; and whensoever they are at a Plunge, their whole Business is to get out of the Question as well as they can, and to leap directly into some other Point of Controversy, and it is next to impossible to keep them to a Point.

32. The Followers of these new Religions interpret the Holy Scriptures as the freak takes them in the Head, and lop off from the Canon what Books they please. Nay, there is not that individual Man among them, tho' he be never so great a Blunder-Head, but makes himself his own Expofitor. Whereas among the Catholicks, the Canonical Books are every where the same, the same Exposition, the same Sense and Version.

33. These new Religions are strangely divided among themselves upon Points of Faith ; and even those of the same Stamp (the *Lutherans* for instance) clash

clash against one another in the Articles of their Belief, and in the very Catechisms which they teach their Children.

34. The Editions of the *Augsbourg* Confession, which the *Lutherans* look upon as the Foundation of their Religion, vary from each other, and very widely differ from the Original.

35. These new Religions open a large and spacious Way to a general Dissolution of Manners, and to all the wild Pursuits of Sensualists and Libertines; in a flat Contradiction to our Blessed Saviour, who has declared the Way to Heaven to be very straight.

36. The Assertors of these Religions make their Fancy their Rule in expounding the Holy Scriptures; they clip off several Words and Texts, and lengthen out others, and change and falsify them as they judge expedient.

37. They have no Succession of their Doctrine, nor of their Ministers from the Time of the Apostles.

38. There's no Harmony among them, with regard to the Exposition of the Holy Scriptures. As is prov'd in the *Considerations*, 33, 39, 40.

41. All the Monuments of Antiquity, all ancient Writings demonstrate the
Roman

Roman Catholick Religion to be the only one, which was founded, establish'd and confirm'd in Christendom.

42. Tho' the Church of *Rome* from her Infancy to these our Days has been attack'd by Tyrants, Idolaters, Pagans and Hereticks, she has always remain'd and still remains invincible, whereas so many other Religions have perished and disappear'd.

43. Protestants teach not a Doctrine helpful to Perfection, or the Practice of Christian Virtues. There's little or no Instruction to be found among them upon Points of Morality, or the Observance of God's Commandments. But every thing is allowed to the Desires and Concupiscence of deprav'd Nature.

44. The Assemblies of the Sectaries, even those that hammer'd out the Confessions of Faith for the new Religions, can never be admitted into a Competition for Doctrine, Sanctity or the Concourse of various Nations, with the general Councils of the Roman Catholick Church, nor with the Fathers who assisted at them.

45. The Principles which Protestants go upon, are not at all calculated for the

the forming of a good Conscience worthy of a Christian.

46. Their Parsons have almost nothing in their Mouths but Calumnies contriv'd to bring the Catholick Religion into Contempt. They varnish over the dangerous Maxims of their own Religion, and every thing that tends to the Perdition of those Souls, that are guided by them.

47. The most tepid and immoral Catholics, are not worse than the best and zealous of the Protestants.

48. No Catholics go over to other Religions with a Purpose to live more piously; but on the contrary to live more at large.

49. The Scriptures in several Places give us plainly to understand, that Hope, Charity, Penance, Alms and other Works of Mercy, are meritorious of Eternal Life: Which our pretended Reformers deny, upon this false Principle, that Faith alone suffices.

50. It often happens that Protestants, who have been the most perverse in their Life-time, desire to die, and do effectually die in the Faith of the Roman Catholics. But we do not find that any

any Catholick desires to make his *Exit* in any other Religion.

Lastly, I must own, it has always given me great Offence, that the Ministers of all these Sects, tho' they highly extol the Merits and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, do yet neglect to exhort their People to an Imitation of His Life; and even give them Occasion to be heedless in thole great Duties of avoiding Sin, of doing Penance for Sins committed, of applying themselves to the Practice of Virtue and to Good Works, by riveting in their Memory this pernicious Error, that our Saviour has by his Death so abundantly satisfied for our Sins, and purchas'd Heaven for us, that all we have to do, is to believe in Him. So that from the Passion, and Death and Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, these poor deluded People take Occasion to indug'e themselves in their Criminal Excesses. But the Orthodox Faith teaches us, that notwithstanding the Passion and Death of the Son of God be of themselves more than sufficient to cancel all the Sins of Men, and that his Merits are of infinite Value, our Saviour will yet have us to apply the Fruits of them to ourselves, by imitating his Virtues, and co-operating

operating with his dolorous Passion in declining Evil and in doing Good. Jesus Christ came into this World upon a double Design: First to satisfy for our Sins, and to deliver us from eternal Damnation; Secondly, to give us a most perfect Pattern of all Virtues, and to inspire us with a Desire to copy them in our Lives; as he has told us in these Words. (1) *I have given you an example, that ye should do, as I have done to you.* (2) *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.* We are also inform'd by St. Peter, (3) *That Christ suffer'd for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*

And now I Address my self to you, my once Fellow-members in Religion, and still my dear Relations, Friends and Country-men, and I conjure you by the five Wounds of Jesus Christ, by his most precious Blood, the Price of our Redemption, and by the Concern you ought to have for the eternal Welfare of your Souls, not to quit a certain Way to Heaven for an uncertain. Consider seriously, what that Faith was which your

(1) St. John 13. 15.

(2) St. Matth. 11. 29.

(3) 1 Pet. 2. 21.

Ancestors profess'd, and which the first Christians of your Nation upon leaving Paganism embrac'd. Consider, in what Religion those great Saints lived, whom you own for such. Weigh seriously these Motives of my Conversion, which I offer you with a Heart that's full of a most sincere Affection. Return to the Way of your Fathers, to the Path of the Saints, to the Religion which has stood for so many ages, and been confirm'd, maintain'd and water'd with the Blood of so many Martyrs: A Religion, which all the ancient Fathers of the Primitive Church asserted and approved: A Religion, against which, as our Blessed Saviour has engaged his Word, the Gates of Hell shall never prevail. Have always an Eye to the Salvation of your Souls. For (1) *what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?* We have but one Soul, and its Felicity lies at Stake in this great Affair. Eternal Salvation is not to be gain'd, but by a true Faith: This true Faith is only one, and no where to be

(1) St. Matth. 16. 26.

found, but in the Roman Catholick Communion. Embrace it therefore, and follow my Example in this Holy Resolution. May God strengthen you with his Grace so to do; that in this true Faith we may advance together toward the Mansions of Eternal Bliss.

Every Plant, which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,
Matth. 15. 13.



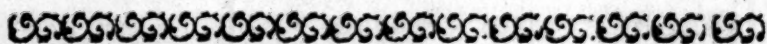
F I N I S.





Numb. 2069.

The P O S T - B O Y .



London, July 1. 1708.

There being Two Mails due from Holland, and the foreign News that came in with the last, being, by this Time exhausted, we shall take this Opportunity to communicate to the Publick the following remarkable Piece, which has given just Offence to most of the Protestants abroad.

‘ D E C I S I O N of the Faculty of
 ‘ Divinity of *Helmstad*, (a famous
 ‘ Lutheran University in the Dut-
 ‘ chy of *Brunswick*) of the Que-
 ‘ stion propounded on Occasion
 ‘ of the Princess of *Wolfembuttel*’s
 ‘ Mar-

‘ Marriage with *Charles III. King*
‘ Of *Spain*.

‘ The said Question was propounded in
‘ these Terms.

*Whether a Protestant Princess, destin'd to
marry a Catholick Prince, may with a
safe Conscience, embrace the Catholick
Religion?*

D E C I S I O N.

‘ **W**E answer, That the Question
‘ propounded cannot solidly be
‘ solv'd without deciding first, Whe-
‘ ther or no the Catholicks are in fun-
‘ damental Errors, and such as are op-
‘ posite to Salvation? Or, which is the
‘ same Thing, Whether the Constitution
‘ of the *Romish Church* be such, as that
‘ one may practice in it the true Wor-
‘ ship of God, and attain Salvation?

‘ Our Answer to the second Query,
‘ on which the first depends, is, with-
‘ out Hesitation, in the *Affirmative*, for
‘ these three Reasons.

First, ‘ Because the Catholicks are, at
the Bottom, of the same Religion with
us, and have the necessary Faith to
know God in Order to Salvation.

For

' For the Foundation of Religion and
 ' Christian Life, is, the Belief of God
 ' the Father, our Creator, of God the
 ' Son, the Messiah, who had been pro-
 ' mis'd, and has deliver'd us from Sin,
 ' Death, the Devil and Hell; and of
 ' the Holy Ghost, who enlightens us.
 ' We must also admit the Ten Com-
 ' mandments of God, which teach us
 ' our Duty to God and to our Neigh-
 ' bours; the Lord's Prayer, which in-
 ' structs us how to pray; the Practice of
 ' the Sacraments of Baptism and of the
 ' Lord's Supper, according to Christ's
 ' Institution and Command. Moreover,
 ' we must acknowledge *The Power of the*
 ' *Keys*, and believe with them, That
 ' God has given in the Church, to the
 ' Apostles and their Successors in Apo-
 ' stolical Functions, the Authority of
 ' Declaring to the Penitent, That their
 ' Sins are forgiven, and to denounce to
 ' the Impenitent, God's Hatred against
 ' them, and what Judgments he prepares
 ' for them, and so either to remit or
 ' retain Sins: And therefore we some-
 ' times repair to the Confession-Chair to
 ' receive Absolution of our Sins.

' Whoever believes all this, and squares
 ' his Actions by his Belief, is in no Fun-
 ' damental

'damental Error; and being a Christian,
 'and a Child of God, and desires to at-
 'tain the Inheritance of eternal Life,
 'he may live and die in that Condition.
 'All these Articles of Faith are the
 'Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine,
 'which is expounded in the Writings of
 'the Prophets and Apostles, and are
 'contained in the little Catechism, divi-
 'ded into six Parts, viz. The Creed,
 'the Lord's Prayer, and our Saviour's
 'Words concerning Baptism, the Lord's
 'Supper, and the Vocation of Ministers.
 'This Catechism is common with us
 'and the Roman Catholicks; and when
 'they have a Mind to instruct any Body
 'in the Christian Faith, those are the
 'Articles they teach and press, as the
 'necessary Points to become a Christian,
 'and have a Share of Salvation: As may
 'be seen by the Romish Catechisms of
 '*Canisius* and *Volusus*, and the Cate-
 'chism lately printed at *Hildesheim*.
 'Wherefore the Authors of the Confes-
 'sion of *Augsbourg* say, in the Preface,
 'That all Christians, both Catholicks and
 'Protestants, fight together under *Iesus*
 '*Christ*; and a little lower they affirm,
 'That our Protestant Religion is not contra-
 'ry to the Christian Religion, nor event to the
 Roman

' Roman Catholick : *And this will be ac-*
 ' *knowledg'd say they, by consulting the*
 ' *Writings of the Fathers.* Which is so
 ' true, that we firmly and confidently
 ' believe, that Persons of undoubted
 ' Probity and Piety are found in Romish
 ' Monasteries.

' Another Ground of Religion is the
 ' Belief of God's being a just Judge,
 ' who rewards Virtue and punishes Sin ;
 ' than which Belief no other Motive is
 ' more conducive to direct us from wic-
 ' ked Acts, according to what the Apo-
 ' stle says, in the 11th Chapter of the
 ' Epistle to the *Hebrews*, Verse 6. *For he*
 ' *that cometh to God must believe that he is,*
 ' *and that he is a rewarder of them that di-*
 ' *ligently seek him.* The Catholicks do
 ' not differ from us as to the Belief of
 ' this Article.

' Neither can it be deem'd, that the
 ' *Romish Church* is not a *true Church* ;
 ' wherein the Ministry of God's Word,
 ' and the Use of Sacraments subsist.
 ' For if it were no more, or had not
 ' been a true Church, all its Members
 ' would be in a State of Damnation,
 ' and irrecoverably lost, which none
 ' amongst us would dare to advance.
 ' Nay, *Melanchton* himself has maintain'd
 that

' that the Romish Church did not cease
 ' being the true Church, because the
 ' Word of God was sufficiently taught
 ' in the divers Parts of the Catechism,
 ' which contains, the Ten Command-
 ' ments, the Creed, and the Lord's
 ' Prayer: And in the Service of Bap-
 ' tism, or in the Epistles and Gospels
 ' that are read on Sundays. The Au-
 ' thor of that Book is *John Sambectus*;
 ' and the late Duke *Augustus*, of Glori-
 ' ous Memory, esteem'd it to that De-
 ' gree, that he made some Alterations in
 ' it, out of common Places of *John Haf-*
 ' : *senreffer*, a famous Divine of *Tubinge*,
 ' which Work is look'd upon as Ortho-
 ' dox, and as such is read all over *Swe-*
 ' *den*, and in the Universities.

' In the third Place, both the Catho-
 ' lick and Protestant Churches believe,
 ' and publickly profess, in the Pulpit
 ' and in Writing, *That the Name of JE-*
 ' *SUS is the only Name in which Men may*
 ' *hope, and whereby they may obtain Salva-*
 ' *tion*; And that Man is not justify'd by
 ' the Works of the Law, that is, he is
 ' not justify'd barely by the Performance
 ' of the Law, but by GOD's Clemency
 ' and Mercy; and the Satisfaction our
 ' Lord *JESUS CHRIST* has given for

us. This is the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, as has been observ'd by the virtuous Abbot lately deceas'd at Doesburg, in the Preface of his Abridgement of the Rules of Faith: *The Church believes (says he) and did ever teach, that no Person, since the Creation of the World, did ever attain Salvation, but by JESUS CHRIST, who is a Mediator between God and Men, according to what is written in the Acts of the Apostles, (chap. 4. v. 12) and as the Council of Trent has acknowledg'd it.*

The same Christian Assembly (*meaning the Council of Trent*) teaches, That the beginning of Justification ought necessarily to proceed from GOD, and his preventing Grace, that is, from the Vocation, whereby GOD calls us, without any Respect to our own Merits. They teach also, that neither Faith, nor Good Works, do merit Justification; and that we ought to believe, that Sins never will, nor were ever forgiven, but through the only Mercy and Grace of GOD, and the Will of JESUS CHRIST.

Our Doctors have been oblig'd to own that the Book entituled *Horulus Anima*, the Garden of the Soul, and the Rituals

' Rituals of *Mentz, Triers* and *Cologne*
 ' prove, that the *Catholicks* that are at
 ' the Point of Death are exhorted not to
 ' put any Confidence in their own Me-
 ' rits, or other Means of Salvation, but
 ' solely to repose all their Trust in *JE-*
 ' *SUS CHRIST*. We might urge the
 ' Forcibleness of the Proofs that are
 ' drawn out of all those Books; but we
 ' shall only quote the *Ritual of Mentz*,
 ' printed in the Year 1699. This is the
 ' Exhortation it prescribes for Dying
 ' Persons to whom the Extreme-Union
 ' is administred. *Your Merits and the*
 ' *Merits of all Mankind, are too inconsider-*
 ' *able for you to seek in them your Comfort*
 ' *and the Hope of your Salvation: Since*
 ' *therefore we acknowledge the Imperfection*
 ' *of our Merits, we put our Trust in the Me-*
 ' *rits of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST,*
 ' *whom GOD has given to the World, in*
 ' *his Love truly Divine. Wherefore place*
 ' *your Hope in that Merciful and Gracious*
 ' *GOD. After the Sick Body has re-*
 ' *ceiv'd the Extreme-Union, they add,*
 ' *place your Comfort in that Eternal God,*
 ' *who is disposed to shew Mercy to you and*
 ' *gives you Strength to resist all the Onsets of*
 ' *Sin and the Devil; and do not doubt but*
 ' *GOD will easily drown your Sins in the*

“ Multitude of the precious Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*. ’Tis by that *SAVIOUR* you shall be rescued from Sin and the Devil, and your Soul shall be truly saved.

“ In another Catechism the Roman Catholicks direct a Dying Person to use this Prayer: *And in case I should for the future live a Holy Life, but it should be your Will that I should die, I had still rather die now, according to your Sacred Will, and forego the good Works I might make, if I liv’d longer.* Among other Directions for Prayers which may be suggested to Sick Persons this is found, by way of Questions and Answers: *You desire that God should use you rather with Mercy than Justice, and that he deal with you not according to your Merits, but according to his Infinite Mercy:* The Sick Body answers, *I do.* Do you not believe that you cannot be saved, but by the precious Death of *JESUS CHRIST* alone? The sick Body answers, *I believe it.*

“ ’Tis Evident that these Catholick Exhortations are grounded in this Truth, *No Body is purify’d and deliver’d from his Sins, but by the Mercy of GOD, and the Merits of JESUS CHRIST.* Which however does not exclude good Works, or the Observance of *GOD’S* Pre-

‘ Precepts, as if good Works, tho’ united
 ‘ to the preceding Merits of **JESUS**
 ‘ **CHRIST**, were of no Use towards
 ‘ eternal Salvation: For no Man can
 ‘ assert the Unprofitableness of good
 ‘ Works, without contradicting the Ho-
 ‘ ly Scripture.

‘ We read in *St. Matthew*, (*Chap. xix.*
 ‘ *v. 17.*) *If thou wilt enter into life, keep*
 ‘ *the Commandments*, And (*Chap. vii. v.*
 ‘ *21*) *Not everyone that says unto me, Lord,*
 ‘ *Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Hea-*
 ‘ *ven: but he that doth the will of my Fa-*
 ‘ *ther which is in Heaven.* And *St. James*,
 ‘ in his Epistle, affirms, *That Abraham*
 ‘ *was justified by his Works.* And if any
 ‘ Body should not look upon this Text
 ‘ as Canonical, let them hear what, a
 ‘ long time before, *Daniel* said to *Nebu-*
 ‘ *chadnezzar*, (*Daniel Chap. iv. v. 27*) *O*
 ‘ *King, let my Council be acceptable unto thee,*
 ‘ *and break of thy Sins by Righteousness, and*
 ‘ *thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the*
 ‘ *Poor.* Is not the giving Alms to the
 ‘ Poor a good Work? And if good
 ‘ Works avail nothing, why does *St.*
 ‘ *John*, at the coming out of the De-
 ‘ *sart*, cry out aloud, *Repent*? Why does
 ‘ **JESUS CHRIST** say, that in order
 ‘ to be saved, a Man must love God and

' *his Neighbour*? Reason it self teaches us,
 ' that a profligate Sinner does not de-
 ' serve the Forgiveness of his Sins, un-
 ' less he abhor them, strike his Breast,
 ' and excite himself to Contrition, what-
 ' ever Confidence he may have in the
 ' Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*.

' We are therefore convinc'd, that in
 ' these Things the Roman Catholicks
 ' agree with the Protestants; and if
 ' there be any Dispute between them,
 ' 'tis only about Words.

' Having demonstrated that the Foun-
 ' dation of Religion subsists in the Roman
 ' Catholick Church, so that *one may be*
 ' *Orthodox, and live and die well and ob-*
 ' *tain Salvation in it*: It is easy to de-
 ' cide the Question propounded.

' The most serene Princess of *Wol-*
 ' *fembuttel*, may in Consideration of
 ' her Marriage, embrace the Catholick
 ' Religion; especially, considering first,
 ' that she did not offer her self, nor has
 ' negociated to be chosen; and that 'tis
 ' unquestionable, that divine Provi-
 ' dence has led her into that Match.
 ' Secondly, that the said Alliance will
 ' be most advantageous, not only to the
 ' Dutchy of *Brunswick*, but also to the
 ' whole Protestant Church, and may
 ' serve.

' serve to procure the Peace of all
' Churches so ardently wish'd for.

' Care only ought to be taken, that
' she make no *Formal Abjuration*: And
' that difficult and intricate *Points of Con-*
' *troversy* be not impos'd upon her as
' *Articles of Faith*. It will be sufficient to
' give her plain Instructions.

*Several Objections may be made to this
our Answer, which, however will appear to
be groundless.*

First Objection.

' The Roman Catholick Religion re-
' quires the Performance of humane
' Ordinances.

Answer.

The Roman Catholicks teach, that
Divine and Apostolical Traditions, that
is, the Doctrine which is not contain'd
in the Holy Scripture, and which
nevertheless, proceeds from *JESUS*
CHRIST and his Apostles, ought to be
receiv'd with the same Respect with the
written Word of God; Which we like-
wise acknowledge, and the only Dis-
pute about that Matter, between them
and us, is, Whether such and such Tra-
dition comes from God or the Apostles?

As to humane Traditions, the Catholicks are of the same Opinion with us.

Second Ojection.

‘ The Catholicks enjoin the Invocation of Saints, when GOD alone is to be invoc’d.

Answer.

The Council of *Trent* does not say it should be done, but only, that it is good and profitable to do it. Nor will any good Christian refuse to invoke them when he considers, that no other Power is ascrib’d to them, but only to pray for us; and that the Greek Church, for Fourteen Ages past, has practis’d this Invocation, which thus explain’d, does not, in the least, derogate from God’s Honour.

Third Objection.

‘ A Roman Catholick must believe *Purgatory*, of which, nevertheless, the Scripture makes no Mention.

Answer.

If by *Purgatory* be understood a Purging of the Souls that have departed this Life, from the Sins that stuck by them, several Doctors of the Church believ’d the same.

Fourth

Fourth Objection.

‘ Several Ceremonies that are perform’d at Mass, give Offence.

Answer.

To those only who are ignorant of what these Ceremonies signify; for there is none of them but has a good Representation, touching which, amongst many others, one may consult the Catechism of *Hildesheim*, p. 45. & seq. As for the rest, the Mass is a Figure and Representation of the most bitter Passion and Death of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Fifth Objection.

‘ The Roman Catholicks are forbid the Use of the blessed Cup in the Sacrament.

Answer.

As Men’s Incredulity does not take away God’s Promises, so the Privation of the Cup cannot be imputed to the Laicks, since ’tis none of their Fault; but ’tis rather to be believ’d, that if they approach the Lord’s Table with a contrite Heart and Confidence, they become Partakers of the Body and Blood of *CHRIST*, as well as the Protestants; so that, among the Catholicks, the Priest receives no more than a Laick. In short, it must be acknowledg’d, that

there's no where any Precept for granting the Cup to the Laicks, which only belong'd to the Apostles and Priests, as plainly appears from the 26th Chapter of St. *Matthæw*, where *they* were *All* (*viz.* the Apostles) order'd to drink of it, which shews, how the Text of St. *Mark*, Chap 14. *They all drank of it*, is to be understood.

Sixth Objection.

The Roman Catholicks are oblig'd to believe Seven Sacraments altho' there be but Two.

Answer.

The Etymology of the Word *Sacrament* is not found in Scripture, nor whether there be but Two or Seven. Thus the Confession of *Augsbourg* reckons sometimes Two only, and sometimes Three, by adding the Absolution to the Lord's Supper and Baptism; which the Roman Catholicks acknowledge to be the Principal. In like manner, the Protestants own, that there are in Scripture more than Two or Three secret Signs of Mysteries; for without doubt, when the Roman Catholicks make the Imposition of Hands and Matrimony, they ground themselves on what we read in the *Acts* of the Apostles. That the Ho-
ly

ly Ghost did confirm them in the Faith on the Day of Pentecost ; and on what St. Paul says in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, Chap. v. 32. *This is a great Mystery.*

The Conclusion.

We are ever ready to answer other Objections, either in Writing, or by Word of Mouth ; tho'tis chiefly to be observ'd, that the Controversies that are between us and the *Roman Catholics*, do not concern the Princess of *Wolfenbuttel*, whose Business only is to continue in the Simplicity of Faith, which is best. The rest belongs to the Divines, among whom there are those, in both Perswasions, whose Eyes God has open'd, so that they clearly perceive, that the Distance between 'em is not so great as is commonly said. To this purpose, what the truly Learned *Philip Melancthon* said in his Judgment of the modern Controversies, address to *Francis I. Part IV. p. 34.* deserves particular Observation : In short, says he, 'tis an easy matter to put an end to all Disputes ; and I hope that those who are pious, and fear God, will agree in all Things. God grant they may ; and that the present Decision may conduce to the Glory of his Name and the Temporal and Eternal Welfare of these Fami-

Families, pursuant to the Will of **JESUS CHRIST**, our common Saviour.

*These are Wishes of all the Professors
of Divinity of the University of
Helmstad, April 28. 1707.*

*Copies of Two Papers written by the
late King Charles II. of Blessed
Memory.*

The First Paper.

THE Discourse we had the other Day, I hope satisfied you in the main, that Christ can have but one Church here upon Earth, and I believe that it is as visible as that the Scripture is in Print, that none can be that Church, but that, which is called the *Roman Catholick Church*. I think you need not trouble your self with entring into that Ocean of particular Disputes, when the main, and in truth, the only Question is; where that Church is, which we profess to believe in the two Creeds? We declare there, to believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church, and

and it is not left to every phantastical Man's Head to believe as he pleases, but to the Church, to whom Christ left the Power upon Earth to govern us in Matters of Faith, who made these Creeds for our Directions. It were a very irrational thing to make Laws for a Country, and leave it to the Inhabitants, to be the Interpreters and Judges of those Laws; for then every Man will be his own Judge, and by consequence no such thing as either right or wrong. Can we therefore suppose that God Almighty would leave us at those Uncertainties, as to give us a Rule to go by, and leave every Man to be his own Judge? I do ask any Ingenuous Man, whether it be not the same thing to follow our own Fancy or to interpret the Scripture by it? I would have any Man shew me, where the Power of deciding Matters of Faith is given to every particular Man. Christ left his Power to his Church even to forgive Sins in Heaven, and left his Spirit with them, which they exercised after his Resurrection: First by his Apostles in these Creeds, and many Years after by the Council at *Nice*, where that Creed was made that is called by that Name, and
by

by the Power which they had receiv'd from Christ, they were the Judges even of the Scripture it self many Years after the Apostles, which Books were Canonical and which were not. And if they had this Power then, I desire to know how they came to lose it, and by what Authority Men separate themselves from that Church? The only Pretence I ever heard of, was, because the Church has failed in wresting and interpreting the Scripture contrary to the true Sense and Meaning of it, and that they have imposed Articles of Faith upon us, which are not to be warranted by God's Word. I do desire to know who is to be Judge of that, whether the whole Church, the Succession whereof has continued to this Day, without Interruption, or particular Men who have raised Schisms for their own Advantage?

This is a true Copy of a Paper I found in the late King my Brother's strong Box written in his own Hand.

JAMES R.

The

The Second Paper.

IT is a sad thing to consider what a World of Heresies are crept into this Nation. Every Man thinks himself as competent a Judge of the Scriptures as the very Apostles themselves; and 'tis no wonder that it should be so, since that part of the Nation, which looks most like a Church, dares not bring the true Arguments against the other Sects for fear they should be turn'd against themselves, and confuted by their own Arguments. The Church of *England* (as 'tis call'd) would fain have it thought, that they are the Judges in matters Spiritual, and yet dare not say positively that there is no appeal from them, for either they must say, that they are Infallible (which they cannot pretend to) or confess that what they decide in matters of Conscience, is no further to be followed, than it agrees with every Man's private Judgment. If Christ did leave a Church here upon Earth, and we were all once of that Church, how, and by what Authority, did we separate from that Church? If the power of Interpreting of Scripture be in every Man's Brain, what need have

we of a Church or Church-men? To what purpose then did our Saviour, after he had given his Apostles Power to Bind and Loose in Heaven and Earth, add to it, that he would be with them even to the End of the World? These Words were not spoken Parabolically, or by way of Figure. Christ was then ascending into his Glory, and left his Power with his Church even to the End of the World. We have had these hundred years past, the sad Effects of denying to the Church that Power in matters Spiritual, without an Appeal. What Country can subsist in Peace or Quiet, where there is not a Supreme Judge from whence there can be no Appeal? Can there be any Justice done where the Offenders are their own Judges, and equal Interpreters of the Law, with those that are appointed to administer Justice? This is our Case here in *England* in matters Spiritual; for the Protestants are not of the Church of *England*, as 'tis the true Church from whence there can be no Appeal; but because the Discipline of that Church is conformable at that present to their fancies, which as soon as it shall contradict or vary from, they are ready to embrace or join with the next Congregation of
 People

People, whose Discipline and Worship, agrees with their Opinion at that Time, so that according to this Doctrine there is no other Church, nor Interpreter of Scripture but that which lies in every Mans giddy Brain. I desire to know therefore of every serious Considerer of these Things, whether the great Work of our Salvation ought to depend upon such a sandy Foundation as this? Did Christ ever say to the Civil Magistrate (much less to the People) that he would be with them to the End of the World? Or did he give them the Power to forgive Sins? St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, ye are God's Husbandry, ye are God's Building; we are Labourers with God. This shews who are the Labourers, and who are the Husbandry and Building; and in this whole Chapter and in the preceding one, St. Paul takes great Pains to set forth that they, the Clergy, have the Spirit of God, without which no Man searcheth the deep Things of God; and he concludeth the Chapter with this Verse, *For who bath known the Mind of the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the Mind of Christ.* Now if we do but consider in human Probability and Reason, the Powers Christ leaves

leaves to his Church in the Gospel, and St. *Paul* explains so distinctly afterwards, we cannot think that our Saviour said all these Things to no Purpose; and pray consider on the other Side, that those, who resist the Truth, and will not submit to his Church, draw their Arguments from Implications, and far fetch'd Interpretations, at the same Time that they deny plain and positive Words, which is so great a Disingenuity, that 'tis not almost to be thought, that they can believe themselves. Is there any other Foundation of the Protestant Church, but that if the Civil Magistrate please, he may call such of the Clergy as he thinks fit for his Turn at that Time, and turn the Church either to *Presbytery*, *Independency*, or indeed what he pleases? This was the Way of our pretended Reformation here in *England*; and by the same Rule and Authority it may be altered into as many more Shapes and Forms as there are Fancies in Men's Heads.

This is a true Copy of a Paper written by the late King my Brother in his own Hand, which I found in his Closet.

JAMES R.

A

*A Copy of a Paper written by the
late Dutcheſs of York.*

IT is ſo Reaſonable to expect, that a Perſon always bred up in the Church of *England*, and as well inſtructed in the Doctrine of it, as the beſt Divines, and her Capacity could make her, ſhould be liable to many Cenſures, for leaving that, and making her ſelf a Member of the Roman Catholick Church, to which, I confeſs, I was one of the greateſt Enemies it ever had; That I chuſe rather to endeavour to ſatiſfie my Friends, by reading this Paper, than to have the Trouble, to answer all the Queſtions that may daily be asked me: And firſt, I do proteſt in the Preſence of Almighty God, that no Perſon, Man or Woman, directly nor indirectly, ever ſaid any Thing to me (ſince I came into *England*) or uſed the leaſt Endeavour to make me change my Religion. It is a Bleſſing I wholly owe to Almighty God, and I hope the hearing of a Prayer I daily made him, ever ſince I was in *France*, and *Flanders*, where ſeeing much of the Devotion of the Catholicks (tho' I had very little my ſelf) I made it my continual Requeſt to
Almighty

Almighty God ; that if I were not, I might, before I died, be in the true Religion : I did not in the least doubt but that I was so, and never had any manner of Scruple 'till *November* last ; when reading a Book, called the History of the Reformation, by Dr. *Heylin*, which I had heard very much commended, and had been told, if ever I had any Doubt in my Religion, that would settle me ; instead of which, I found it the Description of the horridest Sacrileges in the World ; and could find no Reason, why we left the Church, but for Three the most abominable ones, that were ever heard of amongst Christians : First, *Henry VIII*, renounces the Pope's Authority, because he would not give him leave to part with his Wife, and Marry another, in her Life time : Secondly, *Edward VI*, was a Child, and govern'd by his Uncle, who made his Estate out of Church Lands.

And then Queen *Elizabeth*, who being no lawful Heiress to the Crown, could have no Way to keep it, but by renouncing a Church that could never suffer so unlawful a Thing to be done by one of her Children. I confess, I cannot think the Holy Ghost could ever be in such Councils ;

Councils; and it is very strange, that if the Bishops had no Design, but (as they say) the restoring us to the Doctrine of the Primitive Church, they should never think upon it, 'till *Henry VIII.* made the Breach upon so unlawful a Pretence. These Scruples being raised, I began to consider of the Difference between the Catholicks and Us; and examin'd them as well as I could by the Holy Scripture, which, though I do not pretend to be able to understand, yet, there are some things I found so easy, that I cannot but wonder, I had been so long without finding them out: As the real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, the Infallibility of the Church, Confession and Praying for the Dead. After this, I spoke severally to Two of the best (*) Bishops we have in *England*, who both told me there were many things in the *Roman Church*, which it were very much to be wished, we had kept: as Confession, which was no doubt, commanded by God; That Praying for the Dead was one of the ancient things in Christianity: That for

(*) Sheldon *A. B. Cant. Blandford B. of*
Worcest.

their parts they did it daily, though they would not own it: And afterwards, pressing one of them very much upon the other Points, he (*) told me, that if he had been bred a Catholick, he would not change his Religion; but, that being of another Church, wherein, he was sure, were all Things necessary to Salvation, he thought it very ill, to give that Scandal, as to leave that Church, wherein he had received his Baptism.

All these Discourses did but add more to the Desire I had, to be a Catholick, and gave me the most terrible Agonies in the World, within my self. For all this, fearing to be rash in a Matter of that Weight, I did all I could to satisfy my self; made it my daily Prayer to God, to settle me in the Right, and so went on *Chrismass-day* to receive in the King's Chapel; after which, I was more troubled than ever, and could never be in quiet; till I had told my Desire to a Catholick, who brought a Priest to me, and that was the first I ever did converse with, upon my Word. The

(*) Blandford B. of Worcest.

more I spoke to him, the more I was confirm'd in my Design; and, as it is impossible for me to doubt of the Words of our Blessed Saviour, who says, the Holy Sacrament is his Body and Blood, so I cannot believe, that he who is the Author of all Truth, and who has promis'd to be with his Church to the End of the World, would permit them to give that Holy Mystery to the Laity, but in one Kind, if it were not lawful so to do.

I am not able, or, if I were, would I enter into Disputes with any Body; I only in short, say this for the changing of my Religion, which I take God to Witness I would never have done, if I had thought it possible to save my Soul otherwise. I think, I need not say, it is not any Interest in this World leads me to it: It will be plain enough to every Body, that I must lose all the Friends, and Credit I have here, by it; and have very well weighed, which I could best part with, my Share in this World, or the next: I thank God I found no Difficulty in the Choice.

My

My only Prayer is, that the poor Catholics of this Nation, may not suffer for my being of their Religion: That God would but give me Patience to bear them, and then, send me any Afflictions in this World, so I may enjoy a blessed Eternity hereafter.

St. James's Aug.

20th. 1670.

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